

EATING TO MANAGE PERIMENOPAUSE + COTTAGE CHEESE RECIPES

AUSTRALIAN

diabetic LIVING

HEART HEALTHY + GLUTEN-FREE OPTIONS + LOW CARB + HIGH PROTEIN

**MAC 'N' CHEESE
LASAGNE**
See page 46

What a
NERVE!

*Neuropathy:
what it is,
symptoms
& treatment*

**EATING
SEASONAL**

*Spring
vegetables
get the
spotlight*



BRIONY BECKETT

**"Their solution
was always that
I should lose
weight. They
were right"**

We Love
pasta

PLUS!

✓ **GO BANANAS**

✓ **SOLO SUPPERS**

✓ **AIR-FRYER SNACKS**

**RECLAIM
YOUR JOY**

Don't let diabetes
drag you down

**CREATING
PATTERNS**

It's consistency
that's the key

**MOBILITY
MATTERS**

Why it's important
as you age

**SUPPLEMENTS:
YES OR NO?**

We take a look at
what's on the shelf

are media



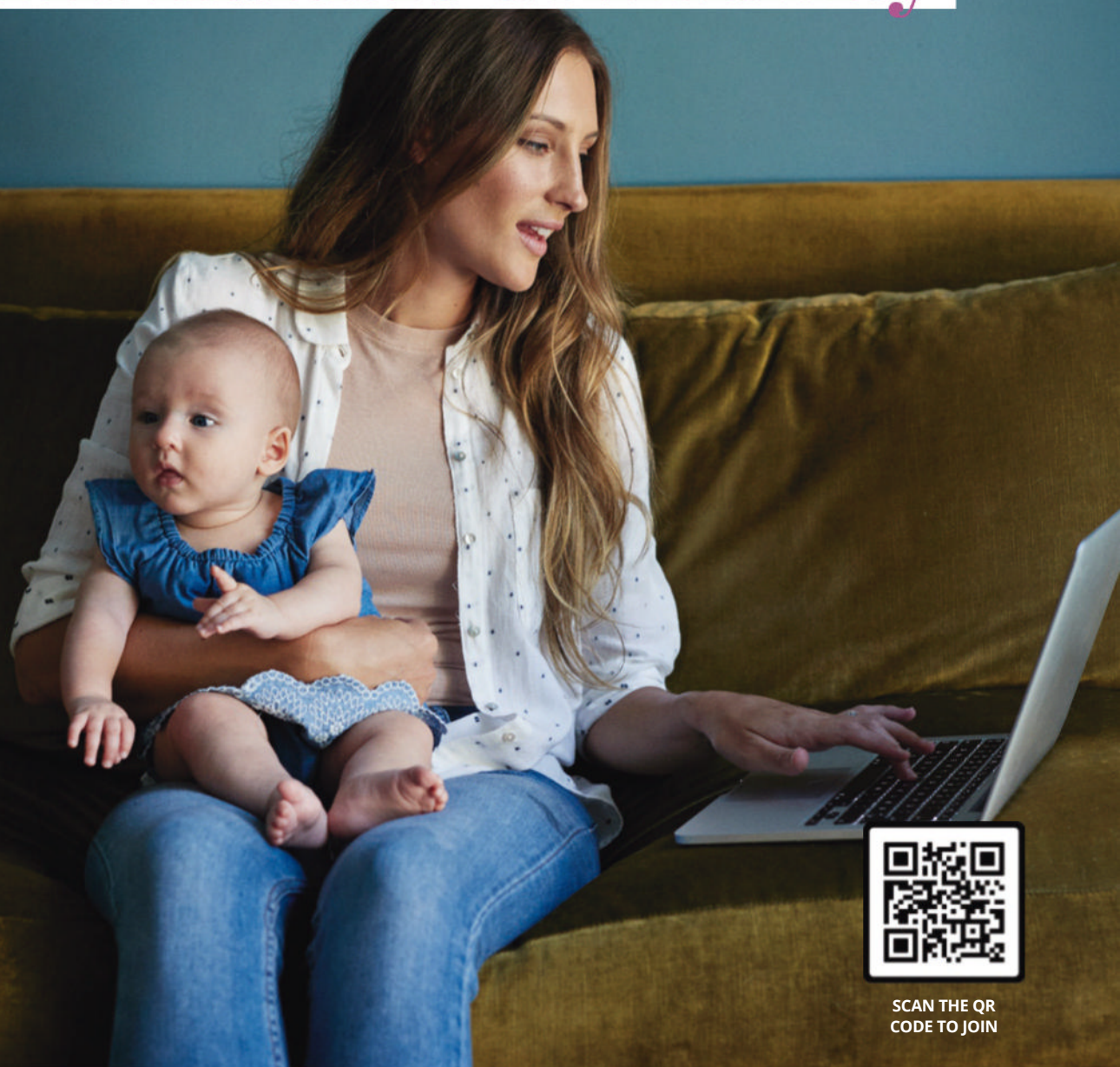
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The Insiders Community



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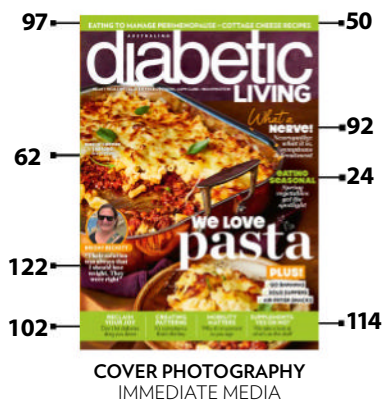
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COMMUNITY**

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SPECIAL OFFER

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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025

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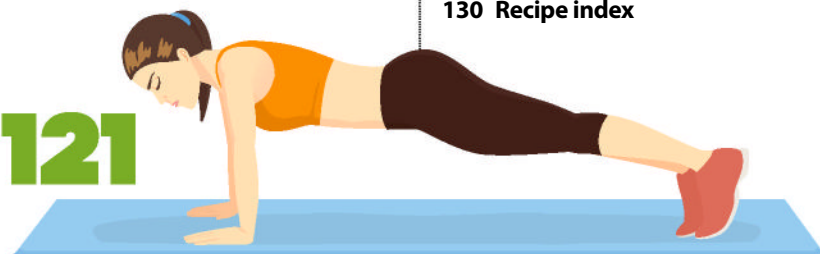
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the team

diabetic LIVING

THE TEAM

Editor ALIX DAVIS

Art Director DANIA WARMERDAM

Content Producer ERIN ROBERTS

Food Editor ALISON ROBERTS

Dietitian SHANNON LAVERY

Editorial Assistant LARA CARLUCCI

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Commercial Brand Manager JESSICA ASHWORTH

jessica.ashworth@aremedia.com.au

Marketing Director CARLY BOWRA

PRODUCTION

Production Manager GRACE NEAVE

Ad Controller FRANCES MALONG

ARE MEDIA GROUP

Chief Executive Officer JANE HUXLEY

Director of Sales ANNA QUINN

General Manager SUSAN ARMSTRONG

DOTDASH MEREDITH CORP.

Vice President/Business Affairs

TOM ROWLAND

Executive Director, Licensing Operations

PAUL ORDONEZ

Senior Director, Business Development

WENDY ZHANG

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OUR EXPERTS

Dr Kate Marsh

Dietitian & diabetes educator

Kate, who has type 1, is in private practice in Sydney; drkatemarsh.com.au

Dr Sultan Linjawi

Endocrinologist

A diabetes specialist, Sultan has a clinic in Queensland; drsultanlinjawi.com

Dr Janine Clarke

Psychologist

Janine is in private practice at Mend Psychology and The Sydney ACT Centre; mendpsychology.com.au

Elissa Renouf

Type 1 parent

Elissa is the owner of Diabete-ezy and a mum of four kids with type 1; diabete-ezy.com

Rachel Freeman

Diabetes educator

Rachel is the mum of a child with type 1, and also works at the Australian Diabetes Educators Association; adea.com.au.

Danielle Veldhoen

Podiatrist

Danielle works at Flinders Medical Centre, South Australia.

Drew Harrisberg

**Exercise physiologist
& diabetes educator**

Drew, who has type 1, offers online coaching/consultations and specialises in designing safe and effective exercise programs; drewsdailydose.com

Dr Ramy Bishay

**Endocrinologist
& bariatric physician**

Ramy is a weight loss, diabetes and obesity specialist and director of Blacktown Hospital's Metabolic and Weight Loss Program in New South Wales.

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**NEXT
ISSUE
ON SALE
OCT 9**

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Flat out or just flat?

Have you been feeling a bit flat lately? Maybe like a balloon that's had most of the air let out of it? Or a banana that's a few days past its best? If that strikes a chord, the good news is that balloons can be reinflated and overripe bananas can find new life as banana bread! It's all about finding what makes you happy and reclaiming your joy. Diabetes can feel like a full-time, not very fun, job sometimes – one that steals your personality as well as your spontaneity. In our feature on page 102, we offer some practical suggestions on how to find your joy, while still looking after your health. It's a feature I've read a couple of times already and made a few mental notes about – I hope you find it useful too.

Supplements are a hot topic these days. Supermarket and pharmacy shelves are crowded with bottles promising the world – but do they deliver. DL dietitian Dr Kate Marsh puts the supplement industry under the microscope on page 114 to see whether they're really worth the money. I suggest taking a read before you make your next "life-changing" purchase.

What can make a difference to your health is what you eat and in this issue we've got plenty of deliciously healthy recipes to satisfy you and your family at every meal. Protein-packed cottage cheese is having a comeback at the moment – turn to page 50 for dishes that definitely aren't your mother's cottage cheese. If you're an air-fryer fan, you'll want to check out our feature on page 64 – air-fryer snacks that are quick, tasty and healthy. We've got a focus on vegies in this issue, with broccoli, sweet potato and eggplant all enjoying the spotlight – we're sure you'll find a recipe you'll love.

Wishing you health and happiness as Spring arrives, hope you enjoy this issue!

Alix

Alix Davis,
Editor

We'd love to hear from you!

We want to hear your stories, answer your questions and share the love with other readers



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Diabetic Living

JUST diagnosed

START
HERE

A diagnosis of diabetes can be scary at first – don't panic, we're here to help



DIABETES 101

Getting your head around 'diabetes lingo'? Read on...

- **When should I test my blood glucose levels (BGLs)?** This varies depending on the type of diabetes and your medication, but possible times include before meals, two hours after eating, before bed, before you exercise and if you're feeling unwell.
- **What should my BGLs be?** As a guide, if you have type 1 diabetes, a healthy target to aim for is 4-6mmol/L before you eat, and 4-8mmol/L two hours after starting a meal. If you have type 2 diabetes, aim for 6-8mmol/L before meals, and 6-10mmol/L two

hours after starting a meal. Ask your doctor or Credentialed Diabetes Educator for more guidance.

- **What's mmol/L?** It stands for millimoles per litre of blood, and is how BGLs are measured.
- **What's HbA1c?** It's your average BGLs over a period of 10-12 weeks and, used in conjunction with the blood glucose monitoring you do yourself, paints a picture of your blood glucose management. Your doctor will arrange a HbA1c test every three to six months.
- **What's a hypo?** It's when BGLs drop below 4mmol/L. A hypo can make it hard to concentrate, so some

activities (like driving) aren't safe, and it needs to be treated quickly using specific foods. Only people who take insulin or some types of glucose-lowering tablets are at risk of a hypo.

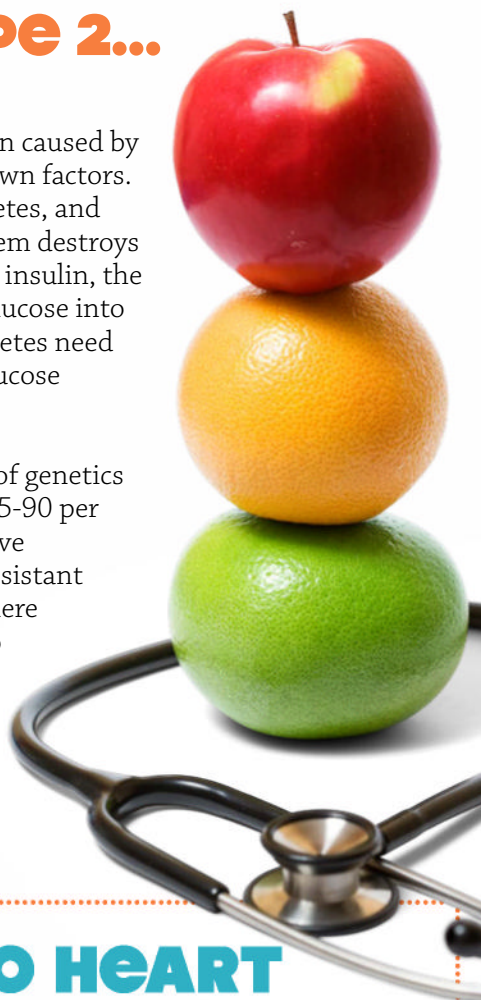
- **Will I have to use insulin?** Yes, if you have type 1. But 50 per cent of people with type 2 will also need insulin six to 10 years after being diagnosed, because the pancreas produces less insulin over time.
- **What's pre-diabetes?** It's when BGLs are higher than normal, but not high enough for a type 2 diagnosis. Lifestyle changes can delay or prevent pre-diabetes from becoming type 2.

TYPE 1 AND TYPE 2...

What's the difference?

● **Type 1** is an auto-immune condition caused by a combination of genetics and unknown factors. It accounts for 10 per cent of all diabetes, and occurs when the body's immune system destroys the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin, the hormone that's vital for converting glucose into energy. People living with type 1 diabetes need to use insulin to reduce the level of glucose circulating in their blood.

● **Type 2** is caused by a combination of genetics and lifestyle factors. It accounts for 85-90 per cent of all diabetes, and is a progressive condition where the body becomes resistant to the normal effects of insulin, or where the pancreas slowly loses its ability to produce enough of the hormone – both of which leave too much glucose in the blood. Lifestyle modifications or medication (and sometimes both) are used to manage type 2 diabetes.



TAKE THIS TO HEART

1 YOU'RE NOT ALONE

About 300 Aussies develop diabetes every day – one person every five minutes. And for every four people diagnosed, someone else is living with diabetes but doesn't know. The longer diabetes goes undiagnosed, the more it can impact your overall health.

2 IT'S YOUR MOVE

Continuing or starting regular physical activity will help lower your short- and long-term BGLs and can also help certain diabetes medications work more effectively. Plus, along with a healthy diet, losing weight – as little as 5 per cent of your body weight – can also have a positive impact.

3 WE'RE HERE

Wondering where to start? Combined with advice from your healthcare team, you've made a great first step. In this (and every!) issue of *Diabetic Living*, you'll find practical, helpful advice, expert responses to questions that might sound familiar and a whole heap of healthy recipes. ■

Losing just 5 per cent of your body weight can have a positive impact.

FOOD MYTHS FOR PWD*

It's my sweet tooth!

It's not that simple. While type 1 is triggered by genetics and unknown factors, type 2 is caused by a mix of genetics and lifestyle factors. One of those is being overweight, but it's not just sugar that causes that. Plus, if you are overweight, that's only a risk factor, not a direct cause of type 2.

No more chocolate!

False. As long as chocolate, or other foods containing added or natural sugars, are eaten as part of a healthy meal plan or combined with exercise, people with diabetes can definitely still enjoy them in moderation. Talk to your GP or dietitian for more info.

Ugh. A 'special diet'

Not really. These days 'healthy eating' for people who have diabetes is no different to the 'healthy eating' guidelines recommended for the general population. You don't need to prepare separate meals or buy special food – the recipes in *DL* are designed for everyone.

*That's People With Diabetes

YOUR healthy life

The latest global diabetes news

NATURE COULD HELP BACK PAIN

Struggling with chronic lower back pain? New research suggests a walk in the park might offer more relief than you'd expect. The University of Plymouth study found that by providing genuine escapism, spending time in nature helped people living with long-term back pain – some for nearly 40 years – manage their physical discomfort better.

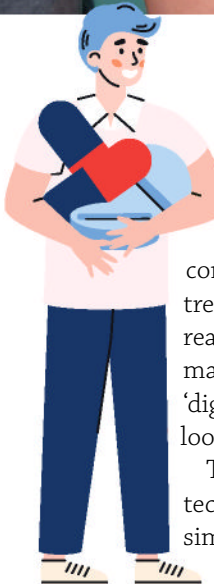
The fresh air, sounds of water and natural surroundings also helped the study's participants feel more tranquil, and less stressed and anxious about their pain levels. "Lower back pain, like many other forms of physical discomfort, can be debilitating, isolating and exhausting," says the study's lead author, Alexander Smith, a PhD researcher at the university's School of Psychology. "Our research showed that those able to get out into nature saw the benefits of doing so, both from a physical and a mental perspective."



REVOLUTIONARY BLOOD TEST COULD END COELIAC DIAGNOSIS DILEMMA

Getting diagnosed with coeliac disease currently means eating gluten for weeks – essentially making yourself sick just to prove you're sick. But researchers from Australia's Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research have developed a world-first blood test that's capable of diagnosing the condition even when someone's eating a gluten-free diet.

The breakthrough test for what's one of Australia's most common autoimmune illnesses, mixes blood with gluten in a test tube, before measuring the immune response. Researchers say it can detect coeliac disease with up to 90 per cent sensitivity and 97 per cent specificity. In future, the new blood test could eliminate the gruelling 'gluten challenge' detection method. Currently, up to 80 per cent of coeliac cases worldwide remain undiagnosed, partly because people aren't keen on returning to eating gluten after feeling better on gluten-free diets.



'Digital twins' could transform type 1 diabetes management

Managing your type 1 diabetes with a closed-loop system? Imagine having a computer version of yourself to test any treatment tweaks before applying them to your real body. University of Virginia researchers have made this a future possibility by developing 'digital twin' technology that's improving closed-loop systems, also known as an artificial pancreas.

The Adaptive Biobehavioral Control, or ABC technology creates a personalised computer simulation matching each user's metabolism.

People can then safely experiment with insulin adjustments in this virtual environment

before making real changes to their artificial pancreas. The technology can also optimise a closed-loop's automated insulin delivery system every two weeks to adapt to a person's changing body.

In a six-month study, people using the ABC technology increased their time spent in 'ideal' blood-sugar ranges from 72 to 77 per cent and reduced their HbA1c from 6.8 to 6.6 per cent.



Q&A ASK DR MARSH

Q: I always plan to eat well at the start of the week, but I end up getting busy and tired by the time Friday rolls around and lose my motivation and energy to prepare healthy meals. Do you have any tips to help me stay on track seven days a week?

Dr Marsh says: You're not alone! This is a problem I often see people struggling with. Here are a few tips that might help:

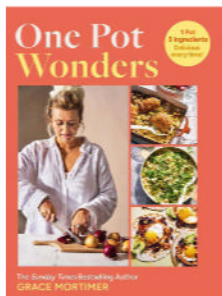
- ▶ Make the effort to plan your meals for the week. Pick some healthy meals, check which ingredients you already have and add the rest to your shopping list. You're more likely to cook a healthy meal if you have planned ahead and have all the ingredients in your kitchen, ready to go.
- ▶ If time is short, consider ordering your groceries online for home delivery. This will free up more time to plan and prepare meals, rather than spending it walking the aisles at the supermarket.
- ▶ Plan for nights when you are too tired or busy to cook. Have the ingredients for a few quick and easy meals, so you can easily prepare something rather than resorting to take-away.
- ▶ Do some batch cooking and freeze extra meals on the weekends for the nights when you don't feel like cooking. Soups, curries, stews and casseroles usually work really well.

Dr Kate Marsh, advanced accredited practising dietitian and credentialled diabetes educator

Fuel up on five flavonoid-rich foods to live longer

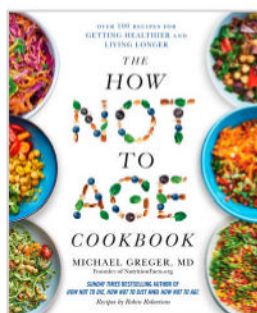
The fact that a group of antioxidants called flavonoids are healthy isn't news, but fresh research that tracked more than 120,000 people over a decade revealed that it's eating a diverse range of flavonoid-rich foods that delivers the biggest benefit.

For example, people who drink two cups of tea each day – which equates to consuming around 500mg of flavonoids – had 16 per cent lower death rates and reduced risks of heart disease, diabetes and respiratory illness. But people who ate the widest variety of flavonoid-rich foods – think tea, berries, dark chocolate, apples and grapes – had even greater protection than those sticking to single sources, even when consuming the same total amount of flavonoids. As a result, the study's authors recommend eating fruits and vegetables in a variety of colours so you're more likely to get the vitamins and nutrients you need to sustain a healthier lifestyle.



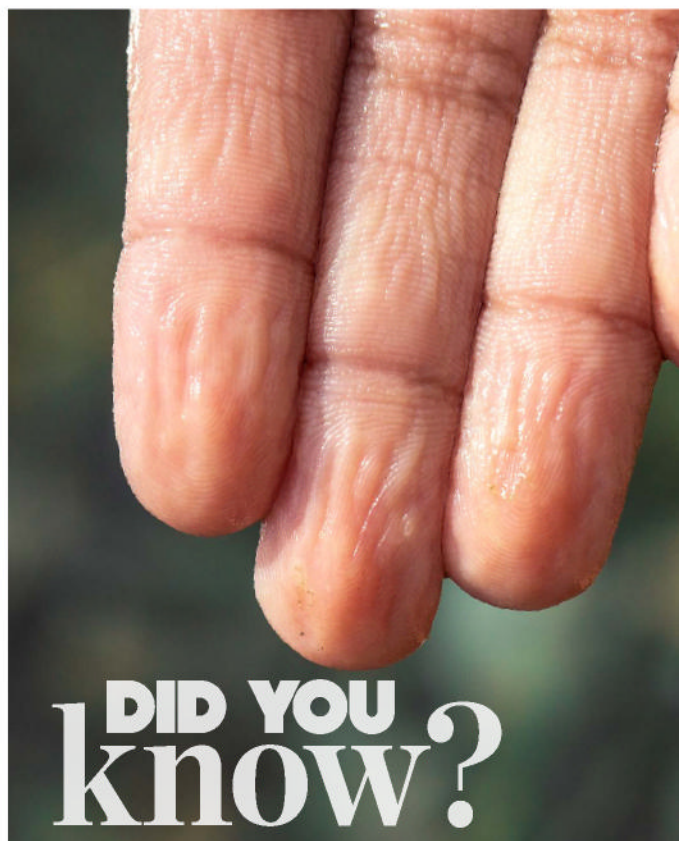
One Pot Wonders
By Grace Mortimer
HQ, \$16.99

With just five ingredients, one pot and minimal effort, discover recipes that will do all the hard work for you. From golden traybakes, bubbling casseroles and zingy salads, nothing in this cookbook is fussy or complicated – just simple satisfying dishes that practically cook themselves. Skip the stress and love every bite whether you need a midweek meal with no clean-up or something indulgent for a lazy Sunday.



The How Not to Age Cookbook
By Dr Michael Greger
Bluebird, \$44.99

Filled with more than 100 recipes to help you live well for longer, this cookbook brings together decades of scientific research. Whether it's a snack or a mouth-watering meal, each dish is simple, nutrition packed and makes use of ingredients that have been shown to promote a healthy lifespan, taking inspiration from places around the world where people traditionally live the longest.



Thursday October 9 is World Sight

Day, which shines a light on eye care around the world. In Australia, diabetes is the leading cause of preventable blindness in working-age Australians, yet nearly one in two people who are living with diabetes aren't having regular eye checks. If that's you, it's important to remember that, as well as having an eye examination when you're first diagnosed, you should continue to have them at least once every two years – or more regularly if your doctor tells you to. Diabetes Australia provides KeepSight, a program designed to help people with diabetes remember to have regular eye checks. Sign up to receive reminders and eye health information at keepsight.org.au.

SAVE THE DATE



Those pruney fingertips that occur after you've spent too much time in the water not only form a pattern that's unique to you, they form the exact same pattern each and every time. The Binghamton University researchers who made the discovery say it's thanks to how blood vessels contract underwater – and since these vessels stay in fixed positions, the resulting wrinkles form consistently.

TURN UP THE HEAT TO TURN DOWN YOUR APPETITE

Striving to eat a little bit less without feeling deprived? Try adding some chilli to your meals. Pennsylvania State University researchers found that people naturally eat less when food is slightly spicier, consuming fewer kilojoules, while still enjoying the meal and feeling satisfied despite eating less. The secret lies in how spice affects your eating pace – people who were served spicier dishes ate more slowly and when you slow down, your body has more time to register fullness signals, naturally reducing your intake.



Q: I've been thinking about seeing a psychologist for some time, but I'm not sure where to start! On top of cost being a factor, do I need a referral? And how can I find one I feel comfortable talking to?

Dr Clarke says: I'd start with exploring your therapy needs and options with your GP. You may be eligible for up to 10 subsidised therapy visits a year under Medicare, in which case your GP will prepare a Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP) and provide you with a letter of referral. Some GPs have preferred therapists who they frequently refer patients to, but you can see the therapist of your choice. The right fit is important, so do some research to ensure your therapist has the appropriate training, expertise and therapeutic approach for your needs. A good place to search is the Australian Psychological Society's therapist directory which you can find at psychology.org.au/find-a-psychologist.

Therapist fees vary. While some therapists bulk bill, so there's no out-of-pocket expense if you have a MHCP in place, the majority have a gap payment. So, if cost is a factor, speak to the practice up-front about this.

You can also see a therapist without a referral from a GP, but self-referred or 'private' clients can't claim the Medicare rebate for their visits. Some private health funds subsidise psychology visits, but this often depends on your level of cover. So if you do have private health insurance, speak to your insurer about any potential rebates before you engage a therapist.

~~~~~  
Dr Janine Clarke, psychologist



## EVERYBODY HAS A UNIQUE 'INSULIN FINGERPRINT'



A new study suggests we all have unique and varying degrees of insulin resistance – whether we're living with diabetes or not. When scientists at the University of Copenhagen analysed muscle tissue from more than 120 people, they discovered surprising individual variations in how our bodies handle this crucial blood sugar hormone, which could revolutionise type 2 diabetes care moving forward.

Instead of waiting for blood sugar levels to spike, doctors might soon be able to detect insulin resistance through simple muscle biopsies,

potentially catching the disease decades earlier. The discovery could also transform treatment for type 2 diabetes – rather than prescribing the same medications to everyone, doctors could tailor therapies based on someone's unique insulin profile. "By learning more about molecular signatures of insulin resistance, we're building the foundation for precision medicine in type 2 diabetes tailored to each patient," says Anna Krook, co-lead author of the study from Sweden's Karolinska Institutet. "Our research is a big step in that direction."

IMAGES GETTY IMAGES



Could something as simple as taking a vitamin D supplement help slow down ageing at a cellular level? New research from a large-scale, long-term trial called VITAL suggests it might. Scientists tracked more than 1000 adults aged over 50 for four years and found that those taking a vitamin D3 supplement experienced significantly less telomere shortening compared to people who weren't taking the supplement. Telomeres are protective caps on chromosomes. They naturally shorten as we age – think of them as cellular 'ageing clocks' – and when they get too short, it bumps up the risk of various age-related diseases. The VITAL study found vitamin D supplementation prevented the equivalent of nearly three years of cellular ageing.

The researchers used a daily dose of 2000 IU of vitamin D3, an amount many doctors already recommend for bone health and immune function. While more research is needed, these findings add to growing evidence that vitamin D offers benefits beyond bone health, potentially helping maintain cellular vitality as we age.





# Here TO HELP

Whether you're newly diagnosed with diabetes or need some support or information having lived with it for some time, there are organisations that can help, including...

**DIABETES AUSTRALIA** This is the national body for people living with all types of diabetes and those who are at risk. Committed to reducing the impact of diabetes, online you'll find a wide range of helpful information about everything from medications to preventing complications. Plus, if you become a member, you'll have access to an online community forum, member-only events and webinars and health professionals that are just a phone call away. Visit [diabetesaustralia.com.au](http://diabetesaustralia.com.au).

## **THE NATIONAL DIABETES SERVICES SCHEME (NDSS)**

An initiative of the Australian Government that's administered by Diabetes Australia, as well as providing diabetes information and resources, importantly, the NDSS also delivers support services and subsidised diabetes products. To register, visit [ndss.com.au](http://ndss.com.au) or call the NDSS Helpline on **1800 637 700**.

## **AUSTRALIAN DIABETES EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION (ADEA)**

Consulting with a credentialled diabetes educator (CDE) can help you understand more about diabetes, learn how to monitor and manage your blood glucose levels and discover what you can do to reduce your risk of diabetes-related complications. Plus, a CDE can encourage your diabetes healthcare team to work together. Head to [adea.com.au](http://adea.com.au) to use the 'Find a CDE' service or call **(02) 6173 1000**.

## **JUVENILE DIABETES RESEARCH FOUNDATION (JDRF)**

Dedicated to creating a world without type 1 diabetes by funding research, JDRF also provides helpful information about type 1 diabetes and a range of community support programs for people living with it. Head to [jdrf.org.au](http://jdrf.org.au) to find out more.

**FOOT FORWARD** Discover how to care for your feet when you're living with diabetes, understand if your feet are at risk from complications and where to access relevant support services when and if you need them. Visit [footforward.org.au](http://footforward.org.au)

**KEEPSIGHT** As well as learning more about diabetes and eye health, at KeepSight you can sign up for regular eye check reminders and find a KeepSight provider near you to make an eye check appointment. Visit [keepsight.org.au](http://keepsight.org.au)

**MYDESMOND** Access a suite of free online health education and behavioural-change programs that can help you self-manage type 2 diabetes or make healthy lifestyle choices after being diagnosed with gestational diabetes. Head to [mydesmondaustralia.com.au](http://mydesmondaustralia.com.au) to join.

## **NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS)**

While the NDIS doesn't fund financial support for diabetes, you may be able to access support if you have a disability caused by diabetes, such as vision impairment, amputation or hearing loss. Visit [ndis.gov.au](http://ndis.gov.au) or call **1800 800 110** for more information.



# 5 DAYS DINNERS



Five flavoursome and nutritious weeknight meals, already planned for you!

## MONDAY

Broccoli  
falafel pitas  
*Recipe, page 16*







**mains**



**HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU**  
see page 90

**TUESDAY**

**Ratatouille lasagne**  
Recipe, page 18



## mains

GFO LC

### BROCCOLI FALAFEL PITAS

PREP 20 MINS COOK 35 MINS SERVES 2 (AS A MAIN)

180g broccoli, roughly chopped  
½ x 400g can no-added-salt chickpeas,  
drained, rinsed and patted dry  
1 clove garlic, crushed  
2 tbsp tahini  
½ tsp ground cumin  
½ lemon, zested, plus 1 tbsp juice  
2 x 31g MEB Wholemeal pita pockets or gluten-free  
pita pockets  
40g mixed salad leaves

1 Preheat oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Line a baking tray with non-stick baking paper. Bring a small saucepan half-filled with water to the boil. Put the broccoli in a steamer or colander and set over the pan, making sure the bottom doesn't touch the water. Cover and steam for 10 minutes or until the broccoli is bright green and tender, but not too soft.

2 Put the cooked broccoli in a small food processor with the chickpeas, garlic, 1 tbsp tahini, cumin, 2 tsp lemon juice and all the lemon zest. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Blitz to a thick paste – it's fine if it's not fully smooth. Roll the chickpea mix into 8 balls and put on the lined tray. Bake the falafels for 25 minutes or until firm and golden. Set aside for 10 minutes to cool slightly.

3 Meanwhile, combine the rest of the tahini and lemon juice with 1 tbsp boiling water. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Toast the pitas and halve widthways. Stuff each pita with the salad leaves and four falafels, drizzling over the tahini dressing to serve.

#### NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVE 1200kJ (287Cal), protein 15g, total fat 13g (sat. fat 2g), carbs 22g, fibre 12g, sodium 139mg

• Carb exchanges 1½ • GI estimate medium  
• Gluten-free option • Lower carb

GFO LC

### SALMON & PUMPKIN SOUP

PREP 10 MINS COOK 35 MINS SERVES 2 (AS A MAIN)

1 tbsp Thai red curry paste or gluten-free curry paste  
80ml (⅓ cup) light coconut milk, plus 1 tbsp, extra  
160g butternut pumpkin, peeled, chopped into  
2cm cubes  
185ml (¾ cup) water  
125ml (½ cup) salt-reduced vegetable stock or  
gluten-free stock  
1 lime, ½ juiced, ½ cut into wedges, to serve  
2 tsp sugar-free maple syrup  
160g baby spinach leaves  
2 x 150g skin-on boneless salmon fillets

1 Heat a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the curry paste and 1½ tbsp coconut milk. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until fragrant and dark.

2 Add the pumpkin and cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes. Stir in the water and stock and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until the pumpkin is tender.

3 Remove the pan from the heat. Transfer two-thirds of the pumpkin to a bowl. Use a hand blender to blitz the pumpkin left in the pan until smooth. Stir in 50ml coconut milk until combined. Stir in the lime juice and maple syrup. Return the remaining pumpkin to the pan. Put the pan over low heat. Stir in the spinach, cooking until just wilts. Remove the pan from the heat. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Cover to keep warm.

4 Season the salmon with freshly ground black pepper. Heat a medium non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the salmon and cook, skin-side down, for 3 minutes or until the skin is golden and crisp. Turn over and cook for 2 minutes. Cook the salmon on each side for 30 seconds, then put on a plate and rest for a few minutes.

5 Divide the soup between serving bowls. Drizzle over 1 tbsp coconut milk (if it's too thick, thin it with a little water). Cut the salmon into large chunks and add to the soup, skin-side up. Serve with the lime wedges for squeezing over.

#### NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVE 1910kJ (457Cal), protein 36g, total fat 30g (sat. fat 9g), carbs 10g, fibre 5g, sodium 874mg

• Carb exchanges ½ • GI estimate low  
• Gluten-free option • Lower carb



A top-down view of two light-colored ceramic bowls filled with a vibrant orange pumpkin soup. Each bowl is topped with several large, seared salmon fillets, tender chunks of pumpkin, and wilted green spinach leaves. A thin, decorative swirl of white cream is drizzled over the soup in each bowl. A fresh lime wedge is placed on the left side of the top bowl. A silver spoon rests on the left side of the top bowl, and another spoon is visible at the bottom of the bottom bowl. The bowls are set on a light grey, textured surface. A portion of a grey fabric, possibly a napkin or clothing, is visible in the bottom right corner.

## WEDNESDAY

Salmon &  
pumpkin soup

*Recipe, page  
opposite*



**GFO**

## RATATOUILLE LASAGNE

**PREP** 25 MINS (+ RESTING) **COOK** 1 HOUR  
**SERVES** 2 (WITH LEFTOVERS FOR 4; AS A MAIN)

500g chargrilled vegetables, patted dry with paper towel  
1 tbsp olive oil  
2 x 400g cans no-added-salt chopped tomatoes  
120g baby spinach leaves  
Large handful of basil, ½ roughly chopped  
250g reduced-fat ricotta  
6 dried lasagne sheets or gluten-free lasagne sheets  
90g (¾ cup) grated reduced-fat mozzarella

### SALAD

40g baby spinach leaves  
½ avocado, sliced  
6 cherry tomatoes, halved  
½ Lebanese cucumber, sliced  
Drizzle balsamic vinegar, to serve

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (fan-forced). Line a roasting dish with non-stick baking paper. Put the vegetables and oil in the roasting dish. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Toss to combine. Roast for 20 minutes.

2 Drain the chopped tomatoes, reserving the juices. Remove the vegetables from the oven and stir in the tomatoes. Season again, then return to the oven for 10 minutes.

3 Meanwhile, put the spinach in a large colander over the sink and pour over boiling water to wilt. Leave the spinach to cool, then squeeze out any excess liquid. Roughly chop.

4 Add the spinach and basil to the roasted vegetables. If the vegetables seem dry, stir in some of the reserved tomato juice. Season.

5 Season the ricotta with black pepper, stirring to make it spreadable. Spread half the vegetable mixture over the base of a 17cm x 25cm baking dish. Top with half the lasagne sheets, then spread over half the ricotta. Cover with the remaining vegetable mixture, the remaining pasta sheets and ricotta.

6 Sprinkle the mozzarella over the top of the lasagne. Cover and bake for 20 minutes. Uncover and bake for a further 10 minutes. Leave the lasagne to rest for 10 minutes. Scatter with the remaining basil leaves. Serve with the salad.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1740kJ (416Cal), **protein** 18g, **total fat** 22g (sat. fat 6g), **carbs** 34g, **fibre** 11g, **sodium** 729mg • **Carb exchanges** 2½ • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free option**

**GF**

## CHICKEN WITH SWEET & SOUR LEEKS

**PREP** 15 MINS (+ 30 MINS MARINATING)  
**COOK** 20 MINS **SERVES** 2 (AS A MAIN)

2 x 125g skinless and boneless chicken breast fillets, trimmed of fat  
2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped  
1 rosemary sprig, leaves picked and finely chopped  
1 tbsp olive oil, plus 1 tsp, extra  
1 leek, trimmed  
1½ tbsp red wine vinegar  
2 tsp honey  
½ x 480g jar roasted red peppers, drained, roughly chopped  
1 bunch broccolini, steamed, to serve  
120g (1 cup) green beans, steamed, to serve

1 Place the chicken between two pieces of non-stick baking paper. Use a rolling pin to bash the chicken until 1cm-thick. Transfer to a baking dish.

2 Put the garlic and rosemary in a small mortar. Use the pestle to bash until finely chopped. Add 2 tsp of the oil. Stir. Spoon the rosemary mixture over the chicken. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Rub in to coat. Cover and put in the fridge for 30 minutes to marinate.

3 Meanwhile, heat a medium chargrill pan over medium-high heat. Halve the leek lengthways, then again across the middle. Toss with ½ tsp oil. Add the leeks and cook for 6-8 minutes, turning occasionally, until softened and well charred. Transfer to a plate and set aside to rest for 5 minutes.

4 Combine the vinegar, honey and remaining oil in a medium bowl. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Add the leeks and peppers. Toss to combine.

5 Clean the grill pan and return to medium heat. Add the chicken and cook for 3-4 minutes on each side until cooked and golden. Transfer to a plate, cover loosely with foil and set aside for 5 minutes to rest.

6 Divide the vegetables and steamed greens between serving plates. Top with the chicken breasts, drizzling over any juices leftover from the vegetables.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1590kJ (380Cal), **protein** 34g, **total fat** 12g (sat. fat 2g), **carbs** 28g, **fibre** 7g, **sodium** 84mg  
• **Carb exchanges** 2 • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten free**



**THURSDAY**

Chicken with sweet  
& sour leeks

*Recipe, page opposite*





GF

## **SPICED PRAWNS WITH PARMESAN POLENTA**

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 20 MINS

**SERVES** 2 (AS A MAIN)

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 punnet cherry tomatoes
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp chilli flakes
- 1 basil sprig, plus a handful of leaves, roughly chopped
- 250g raw king prawns, peeled and deveined
- 95g ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) instant polenta (cornmeal)
- 2 tbsp finely grated parmesan
- 160g green beans, steamed, to serve

**1** Heat the oil in a medium, deep, non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes, chilli and basil and cook, stirring often, for 2-3 minutes or until the tomatoes start to burst. Squash a few more of the tomatoes to release their juices, then add 1 tbsp water. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until you have a chunky, thickened sauce – at least half the tomatoes should be completely broken down.

**2** Season the sauce with freshly ground black pepper, removing the basil sprig. Stir in the prawns and cook for 3-4 minutes or until cooked through.

**3** Meanwhile, to make the polenta. Bring 450ml water to the boil in a medium saucepan. Gradually pour in the polenta, stirring continuously with a whisk. Continue to cook, whisking for 1 minute or until the polenta is smooth and combined. Remove from the heat and stir in half the parmesan. Season with pepper.

**4** Spoon the polenta between shallow bowls. Top with the saucy prawns, remaining basil and a sprinkle of parmesan. Serve with steamed green beans.

### **NUTRITIONAL INFO**

**PER SERVE** 1580kJ (378Cal), **protein** 23g, **total fat** 14g (sat. fat 4g), **carbs** 37g, **fibre** 6g, **sodium** 362mg • **Carb exchanges** 2½  
• **GI estimate** medium • **Gluten free**



**FRIDAY**

Spiced prawns with  
parmesan polenta

*Recipe, page opposite*







# LOVE YOUR LEFTOVERS

Not sure what to do with the remaining ingredients?  
Take inspiration from these tasty tips

## FRUIT & VEGETABLES

**ROSEMARY:** Finely chop and use in dressings. Toss with a selection of vegetables, extra virgin olive oil and garlic. Roast until tender.

**BASIL:** Use in salads, toasted sandwiches and in dressings.

**AVOCADO:** Slice and use on sandwiches, mash and spread over toast. Sprinkle with freshly ground black pepper. Top with basil leaves and sliced tomatoes. Serve as a snack.

**CHERRY TOMATOES:** Finely chop and mix with shredded basil, crushed garlic, extra virgin olive oil, finely chopped red onion, squeeze lime juice and freshly ground black pepper. Serve with chargrilled chicken and mixed salad leaves.

**LEMON:** Use in dressings, cut into wedges and drizzle over grilled fish. Slice and add to your water bottle for a little flavour boost.

**CUCUMBER:** Cut into sticks and munch on as a snack or add slices of cucumber, lime and a few mint leaves to your water bottle.

## GROCERIES

**RED PEPPERS:** Thinly slice and use on top of pizzas, or on toasted sandwiches.

**LASAGNE SHEETS:** Cut leftover sheets into thin strips and cook in boiling water until tender. Serve with your favourite healthy bolognese sauce.

**CURRY PASTE:** Mix a little curry paste with lemon juice and natural low-fat yoghurt. Marinate chicken, prawns or lamb. Grill and serve with steamed potatoes and salad leaves.

**COCONUT MILK:** Use in curries, soups and smoothies.

**VEGETABLE STOCK:** Use in soups, casseroles and sauces.

**CHICKPEAS:** Add to casseroles, use in salads or throw in with roasted vegetables for the last 15-20 minutes of cooking.

**PITA:** Cut into small wedges and place on a tray lined with baking paper. Bake in an oven preheated to 180°C (fan-forced) for 8-10 minutes or until crispy. Serve with dips or just to crunch on.

**POLENTA:** Make up and combine with grated parmesan and reduced-fat mozzarella. Set in a tin and chill in the fridge. Once set, cut into pieces and spray with cooking spray. Grill until light golden brown. Serve with chargrilled chicken and steamed broccolini. ■



# SHOPPING LIST

## GROCERIES

- ☐ 480g jar roasted red peppers
- ☐ 2 x 400g cans no-added-salt chopped tomatoes
- ☐ 250g pkt dried lasagne sheets
- ☐ 210g jar Thai red curry paste
- ☐ 270ml can light coconut milk
- ☐ 1L carton salt-reduced vegetable stock
- ☐ 400g can no-added-salt chickpeas
- ☐ 1 x 250g pkt wholemeal Pita Pockets
- ☐ 500g pkt instant polenta (cornmeal)

## PANTRY

- ☐ 5 cloves garlic
- ☐ Red wine vinegar
- ☐ Honey
- ☐ Grated reduced-fat mozzarella
- ☐ Balsamic vinegar
- ☐ Sugar-free maple syrup
- ☐ Tahini
- ☐ Ground cumin
- ☐ Chilli flakes
- ☐ Olive oil
- ☐ Parmesan

## FRUIT & VEGETABLES

- ☐ 1 bunch rosemary
- ☐ 1 leek
- ☐ 1 bunch broccolini
- ☐ 280g green beans
- ☐ 320g baby spinach leaves
- ☐ 1 bunch basil
- ☐ 1 avocado
- ☐ 2 punnets cherry tomatoes
- ☐ 1 Lebanese cucumber
- ☐ 160g piece butternut pumpkin
- ☐ 1 lime
- ☐ 1 lemon
- ☐ 180g broccoli
- ☐ 40g mixed salad leaves

## MEAT & POULTRY

- ☐ 2 x 125g skinless chicken breast fillets

## CHILLED

- ☐ 500g chargrilled vegetables
- ☐ 250g reduced-fat ricotta

## SEAFOOD

- ☐ 2 x 150g skin-on boneless salmon fillets
- ☐ 250g raw green king prawns



# 5 ways *with* **SWEET** **POTATO**



A superfood that's rich in nutrients, boosts immunity and reduces inflammation – here's how to add this hero ingredient to your meal plan



5 ways

Miso roasted tofu with  
sweet potato  
*Recipe, page 27*

**HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU**  
see page 90





Sweet potato nachos  
*Recipe, page opposite*



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**SWEET POTATO NACHOS**

PREP 15 MINS COOK 35 MINS SERVES 2 (AS A MAIN)

3 small (about 600g) orange sweet potato  
 1 tbsp olive oil  
 420g can no-added-salt black beans, rinsed and drained  
 100g tomato salsa or gluten-free salsa  
 40g (1/3 cup) grated reduced-fat cheese  
 1 avocado  
 Juice of 1 lime  
 1 small bunch coriander, leaves picked and roughly chopped  
 1/2 red onion, finely chopped

1 Preheat oven to 160°C (fan-forced). Line a roasting tin with non-stick baking paper. Place the sweet potato on the lined tray. Pierce the potatoes a few times or bake at 160°C (fan-forced) for 40 minutes or until tender (see Cook's tip).

2 Increase oven temperature to 180°C (fan-forced). Halve each potato and scoop out roughly half the flesh to save for another meal (you can mash and freeze it). Cut the potato skins in half lengthways, then season with freshly ground black pepper and rub with the oil. Arrange the potato skins in a single layer in the roasting tin and bake for 15 minutes or until starting to crisp.

3 Scatter the beans, salsa and cheese over the potato skins and return to the oven for 10-15 minutes or until the cheese is bubbling. Chop the avocado and toss in the lime juice. Top the potato skins with the avocado mix, coriander and red onion. Serve.

**NUTRITIONAL INFO**

PER SERVE 2180kJ (522Cal), protein 21g, total fat 22g (sat. fat 6g), carbs 52g, fibre 16g, sodium 448mg • Carb exchanges 3½ • GI estimate low • **Gluten-free option**

**COOK'S TIP**

To speed up the cooking time you can cook the sweet potato in step 1 in the microwave. Simply pierce the sweet potato with a fork and then microwave on High/100% for 10 minutes or until the sweet potato is tender.

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**MISO ROASTED TOFU WITH SWEET POTATO**PREP 15 MINS COOK 30 MINS  
SERVES 4 (AS A MAIN)

400g firm tofu, drained  
 100g green beans  
 2 tbsp olive oil  
 2 tbsp black or white sesame seeds, toasted  
 2 x 200g orange sweet potato  
 2 green shallots, finely sliced

**DRESSING**

3 tbsp white miso or 2 tbsp brown miso paste  
 3 tbsp mirin  
 3 tbsp fresh lime juice

1 Preheat oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Line a baking tray with non-stick baking paper. Wrap the tofu in paper towel, place in a shallow dish and put a heavy plate on top to help squeeze out the water. When the paper is wet, replace with another wrapping and weigh down again. Chop the tofu into medium cubes (about 2.5cm).

2 To make dressing, whisk all the ingredients in a small bowl.

3 Bring a small saucepan of water to the boil. Add the beans and simmer for 1 minute. Drain and rinse under cold water. Set aside. Spread the tofu out in a single layer over the lined tray. Pour over half the dressing. Sprinkle the sesame seeds on top. Toss to combine. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until golden crisp.

4 Meanwhile, cut the sweet potatoes in half. Place the sweet potato in a heatproof bowl. Cover and microwave on High/100% for 10-15 minutes until very soft. Mash the sweet potato until smooth.

5 Divide the sweet potato between serving bowls. Top with the tofu and green beans. Drizzle over the remaining dressing. Sprinkle with the green shallots and serve.

**NUTRITIONAL INFO**

PER SERVE 1880kJ (450Cal), protein 19g, total fat 21g (sat. fat 3g), carbs 39g, fibre 11g, sodium 617mg • Carb exchanges 2½ • GI estimate low • **Gluten free**





Sweet potato jacket with coronation chickpeas

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## SWEET POTATO JACKET WITH CORONATION CHICKPEAS

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 10 MINS  
**SERVES** 4 (AS A MAIN)

2 large (750g each) orange sweet potatoes  
425g can no-added-salt chickpeas, rinsed and drained  
170g Farmers Union Greek Style High Protein Yoghurt  
2 tbsp mango chutney or gluten-free mango chutney  
2 tsp curry powder or gluten-free curry powder  
Juice of ½ lime, plus extra wedges, to serve  
½ small red onion, thinly sliced  
Small handful coriander leaves  
Pinch nigella seeds

1 Use a fork to pierce the sweet

potatoes all over. Place on microwave-safe plate and cook on High/100% for 5-6 minutes or until soft.

2 Put the chickpeas, yoghurt, mango chutney, curry powder, a good squeeze of lime juice in a bowl. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Toss to combine.

3 Split the baked sweet potatoes and fill with the yoghurt mixture. Top with the red onion, coriander and nigella seeds. Serve ½ stuffed potato per person with a wedge of lime on the side.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1500kJ (359Cal), protein 14g, total fat 1g (sat. fat 1g), carbs 67g, fibre 14g, sodium 172mg • Carb exchanges 4½ • GI estimate low • **Gluten-free option**

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## SWEET POTATO TEX MEX SALAD

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 30 MINS  
**SERVES** 4 (AS A MAIN)

600g orange sweet potato, cut into even chunks  
¼ tsp chilli flakes  
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
420g can no-added-salt black beans, drained and rinsed  
½ x 420g can no-added-salt corn kernels, rinsed and drained  
2 small avocados, chopped  
250g tomatoes, cut into chunks  
1 small red onion, thinly sliced  
1 bunch coriander, roughly chopped  
Juice 1 lime

1 Preheat oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Line a baking tray with non-stick baking paper. Put the sweet potato, chilli flakes and 1 tbsp olive oil. Season with pepper. Toss to combine. Roast for 30 minutes or until the sweet potato is tender.

2 Meanwhile, put the black beans, corn, avocado, tomatoes, onion, coriander, lime juice and remaining oil in a small bowl. Season with pepper. Toss to combine.

3 Divide the salad and sweet potato evenly between plates. Serve.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1640kJ (392Cal), protein 9g, total fat 17g (sat. fat 2g), carbs 45g, fibre 12g, sodium 35mg • Carb exchanges 3 • GI estimate low • **Gluten free**



Sweet potato  
Tex Mex salad  
*Recipe, page opposite*





A top-down photograph of various ingredients for a curry. On the left, several whole sweet potatoes are partially covered by a striped cloth. In the center, several long, peeled carrots are laid out. To the right, a small wooden bowl is filled with coarse white salt. The background is a light-colored wooden surface.

**GFO**

## **WEST INDIAN SWEET POTATO CURRY**

**PREP** 15 MINS **COOK** 30 MINS  
**SERVES** 6 (AS A MAIN)

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 2 red onions, halved and sliced
- 3cm piece ginger, finely chopped
- 1-2 tsp curry powder or gluten-free curry powder
- 1 tsp ground allspice
- 400g can no-added-salt chopped tomatoes
- 200g light coconut milk
- 1 tbsp thyme leaves
- 1 tsp salt-reduced vegetable stock powder or gluten-free stock powder
- 1kg orange sweet potato, peeled, cut into large cubes
- 325g white cabbage, roughly chopped
- 2 red capsicums, chopped

### **RICE & PEAS**

- 110g (½ cup) brown basmati rice
- 1 red onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 tbsp thyme leaves
- 1 tsp salt-reduced vegetable stock powder or gluten-free stock powder
- 420g can no-added-salt black beans

**1** Heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add the onions and ginger. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Add the curry powder and allspice. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Pour in the tomatoes plus a can of the tomatoes filled with water, coconut milk, thyme and stock powder.

**2** Add the sweet potatoes, cabbage and capsicum to the pan. Cover the pan and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 20-25 minutes or until all the vegetables are tender but with a little bite, topping up with a little water if looking dry.

**3** To make the rice and peas, tip the rice into a saucepan with the onion, garlic, thyme and stock powder. Pour in 600ml water, cover and cook for 25 minutes or until the liquid has been absorbed and the rice is tender – check towards the end to make sure it isn't catching. Stir in the beans and heat through. Sprinkle with extra thyme leaves.

### **NUTRITIONAL INFO**

**PER SERVE** 1500kJ (359Cal),  
**protein** 13g, **total fat** 6g (sat. fat 3g), **carbs** 57g, **fibre** 16g, **sodium** 248mg • **Carb exchanges** 4 • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free option**



### COOK'S TIP

Prepare this vegetarian curry in just 15 minutes. Packed with onions, sweet potato, cabbage, tomatoes and capsicums, it contains all five of your 5-a-day.

#### West Indian sweet potato curry

*Recipe, page opposite*





A photograph of a woven basket filled with fresh vegetables, including several heads of broccoli and leafy greens, set against a rustic wooden background. The basket is made of light-colored, thick-woven material and hangs from the top. The vegetables are vibrant green and appear to have some water droplets on them. The wooden background consists of vertical planks with a natural grain.

**HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU**  
see page 90



in season

# *garden fresh* Broccoli

**Forget the healthy-but-bland pairing of chicken and broccoli  
loved by bodybuilders, we show you how to get maximum  
health benefits without compromising on flavour**

Broccoli is a natural superfood - providing a mix of antioxidants, fibre and micronutrients essential for good health. It is a good source of:

**VITAMIN C** – to support our immune system

**FOLATE** – important for healthy cell growth and function

**POTASSIUM** – for a healthy blood pressure

**VITAMIN K** – important for blood clotting

Broccoli is often referred to as a 'free food' or a non-starchy vegetable, meaning it is very low in carbohydrate and energy (kilojoules), so it can be eaten in large quantities without impacting your blood glucose management or body weight.

Plus, broccoli contains an active compound called sulforaphane which has been linked with improved insulin sensitivity and blood glucose management.

## HOW TO STORE IT

### CHILL IT

Keep in a sealed plastic bag in the fridge or in an unsealed plastic bag in the crisper section for up to 3 days.

### FREEZE IT

Break the broccoli into florets and freeze on a baking tray. Once frozen, transfer to freezable bags and store for up to 3 months.





# 3 WAYS WITH BROCCOLI

## GRILL UNTIL CRISPY

Try tossing broccoli in olive oil, pepper and spices, then grilling until charred and crispy. This gives the broccoli a crunchy interior and crisp exterior, which is perfect tossed in grain salads or eaten with oozy burrata and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.

## SHRED IT

Thinly shredded raw broccoli works well as the base of a salad, too. It can be tossed with a Caesar dressing, crispy pancetta and a boiled egg, or tossed with roasted tomatoes and balsamic, for a crunchy and satisfying salad that feels light and summery.

## STUFF IT IN A SANDWICH

It might be a bit unusual, but broccoli has become a trendy sandwich filling. Roast or steam it, then stuff into a focaccia or panini with mozzarella or mortadella, anchovies and olive oil. Italians have been eating broccoli in their sandwiches for years.



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## ROAST BROCCOLI & SESAME RAMEN NOODLE BOWLS

PREP 15 MINS COOK 30 MINS

SERVES 3 (AS A MAIN)

300g (½ head) broccoli, broken into florets

1 tbsp sesame oil

1 tbsp sesame seeds, plus extra, to serve

3 x 60g eggs

200g dried egg noodles or gluten-free noodles

2 green shallots, sliced

2 radishes, thinly sliced

Crispy chilli oil, to serve (optional)

### DRESSING

2 tbsp sesame oil

1 tbsp brown miso paste or gluten-free miso paste

Pinch chilli flakes

2 tsp brown sugar

1-2 limes, juiced (to taste)

1 small clove garlic, crushed

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (fan-forced). Line a baking tray with non-stick baking paper. Put the broccoli, sesame oil, sesame seeds and freshly ground black pepper in a bowl. Toss to combine. Spread out

over the lined tray. Roast for 15-20 minutes or until charred and tender.

2 Meanwhile, bring a medium saucepan of water to the boil. Add the eggs and cook for 6 minutes and 30 seconds. Use a slotted spoon to remove the eggs and lower into iced water. Cool for 3 minutes. Peel the shells.

3 To make the dressing, whisk all the ingredients in a medium bowl.

4 Cook the noodles following packet instructions in a medium saucepan of boiling water. Drain the noodles and add to the dressing. Toss to combine.

5 Divide the noodles between two serving bowls. Top each with a halved egg, the green shallots, radishes and charred broccoli. Sprinkle with extra sesame seeds and crispy chilli oil, if you like.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVE 2130kJ (510Cal), protein 21g, total fat 27g (sat. fat 5g), carbs 42g, fibre 7g, sodium 420mg • Carb exchanges 3 • GI estimate low • Gluten-free option









# *garden fresh* Eggplant

Pack more goodness into salads, stews and pasta with this glossy fruit

**E**ggplants belong to the nightshade plant family and grow in a manner much like tomatoes, hanging from tall vines. As well as the classic purple variety, you can find lavender, jade green, orange and yellow eggplant in various shapes and sizes.

## **Are eggplants safe for everyone?**

There have been rare cases of eggplant allergy and they do contain oxalates, although not as much as other fruits and vegetables. However, people with a history of oxalate-containing kidney stones may choose to avoid over-consuming them or choose cooking methods that reduce levels, such as boiling.

## **So, are eggplants good for you?**

Low in kilojoules and fat but a good source of fibre, eggplants are a great healthy food to add to your shopping basket. They contain protective antioxidants and, impressively, may help to lower cholesterol and blood glucose levels.

## **5 REASONS TO EAT** *eggplants*

### **SOURCE OF ANTIOXIDANTS**

Eggplants are a source of protective antioxidants, one being nasunin, which is what gives them the purple skin and has been found to protect brain cell membranes.

### **MAY HELP MANAGE BLOOD GLUCOSE LEVELS**

Eggplants are a useful source of fibre as well as being low in fat and sugar, making them a smart choice for those managing type 2 diabetes. Studies suggest eggplant extract may also help control glucose absorption.

### **MAY HELP MANAGE CHOLESTEROL LEVELS**

Some studies suggest including eggplant in your diet may help

lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, the type referred to as 'bad' cholesterol. These effects are likely to be due to the fibre as well as the antioxidant content of eggplant.

### **MAY HELP MANAGE WEIGHT**

As it's a good source of fibre and low in kilojoules, eggplant is a great one for your shopping list if you're looking to manage your weight. What's more, plant compounds in eggplant appear to help limit the digestion of fat.

### **MAY SUPPORT HEART HEALTH**

Beneficial compounds in eggplant help to dilate blood vessels and may lower blood pressure.



in season

**HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU**  
see page 90





GFO

## SLOW COOKER EGGPLANT & CHICKPEA STEW

**PREP** 15 MINS **COOK** 10 HOURS

**SERVES** 6 (AS A MAIN)

200g dried chickpeas, soaked in cold water overnight

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra, to serve (optional)

2 brown onions, finely sliced

6 cloves garlic, crushed

1 tbsp Middle Eastern spice mix

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 small bunch flat-leaf parsley, stalks finely chopped, leaves roughly chopped, to serve

3 eggplants, sliced into 2cm rounds

2 x 400g cans no-added-salt chopped tomatoes

Juice of 1 lemon

50g (1/3 cup) pine nuts, toasted, to serve

3 wholemeal pita pockets or gluten-free pockets, halved, to serve

**1** Drain the chickpeas and put in a large saucepan. Cover with plenty of cold water and bring to the boil over high heat. Simmer for 10 minutes. Drain.

**2** Heat the 2 tbsp oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until beginning to soften. Stir in the garlic, spice mix and cinnamon. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute.

**3** Tip the onion mixture into a slow cooker. Add the chickpeas, parsley stalks, eggplants, tomatoes and a can of water. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Cover and cook on high for 2 hours, then turn the heat to low. Cook for a further 6-8 hours or until the mixture reduces slightly and the chickpeas and eggplants are really tender.

**4** Stir the lemon juice into the chickpea stew. Scatter over the pine nuts and parsley leaves. Drizzle over some extra olive oil and serve with the pita pockets.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 2030kJ (486Cal), **protein** 19g, **total fat**

17g (sat. fat 3g), **carbs** 56g, **fibre** 21g, **sodium** 395mg

• **Carb exchanges** 3½ • **GI estimate** medium • **Gluten-free option**

### COOK'S TIP

\*When gluten free, remember to pick the debris or contaminant grains from the dried chickpeas (if present), wash them in a sieve and then place in the soaking water overnight.



in season

Artichoke &  
eggplant rice  
*Recipe, page 40*





GFO

## ARTICHOKE & EGGPLANT RICE

**PREP** 15 MINS **COOK** 50 MINS

**SERVES** 6 (AS A MAIN)

60ml (¼ cup) olive oil  
 2 eggplants, cut into chunks  
 1 large brown onion, finely chopped  
 2 cloves garlic, crushed  
 1 small bunch flat-leaf parsley, leaves picked, stalks finely chopped  
 2 tsp smoked paprika  
 2 tsp ground turmeric  
 400g paella or arborio rice  
 1L (4 cups) salt-reduced vegetable stock or gluten-free stock  
 500ml (2 cups) water  
 400g can artichoke hearts, drained, cut into wedges  
 2 lemons, 1 juiced, 1 cut into wedges, to serve

**1** Heat 2 tbsp of the oil in a large non-stick frying pan or paella pan. Add the eggplant and cook, stirring often, for 4-5 minutes or until nicely coloured on all sides. Remove from the pan and transfer to a plate. Set aside.

**2** Add remaining oil to the pan and add the onion. Cook, stirring often, for 2-3 minutes over medium heat or until the onion starts to soften. Add the garlic and parsley stalks. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add the paprika, turmeric and rice. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add half the stock and cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes.

**3** Nestle the eggplant and artichokes into the mixture. Pour over the remaining stock and water and cook for a further 20 minutes or until the rice is cooked through.

**4** Chop the parsley leaves and add to the rice with the lemon juice.

Season with freshly ground black pepper. Serve with the lemon wedges.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1670kJ (400Cal), **protein** 9g, **total fat** 11g (sat. fat 2g), **carbs** 59g, **fibre** 9g, **sodium** 565mg • **Carb exchanges** 4 • **GI estimate** high • **Gluten-free option**

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## VEGETABLE BIRYANI

**PREP** 15 MINS **COOK** 45 MINS

**SERVES** 5 (AS A MAIN)

220g (1 cup) brown basmati rice  
 1½ tbsp olive oil  
 1 large brown onion, finely chopped  
 1 cinnamon stick  
 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped (optional)  
 3 large cloves garlic, finely chopped  
 4cm piece ginger, peeled, finely chopped  
 1½ tsp cumin seeds  
 1 large red capsicum, roughly chopped  
 1 large eggplant, cut into cubes  
 1-2 tsp curry powder or gluten-free curry powder  
 400g can no-added-salt chopped tomatoes  
 2 tsp salt-reduced stock powder or gluten-free stock powder  
 320g small cauliflower florets  
 ½ bunch coriander, stems and leaves separated and chopped  
 2 tbsp raisins  
 60g (½ cup) unsalted cashew nuts, toasted

**1** Put the rice in a fine sieve and run under cold water until the water runs clear. Cook the rice in a medium saucepan of boiling water

for about 20 minutes or until almost tender.

**2** Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large, deep non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add the onion, cinnamon stick, chilli, garlic and ginger. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Scatter over the cumin seeds. Cover and cook for 5 minutes.

**3** Add the capsicum and eggplant to the pan. Cook, stirring for 3-5 minutes, until the vegetables start to soften. Stir in the curry powder, tomatoes and stock powder. Add the cauliflower florets, coriander stems and raisins. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover and cook for 10 minutes.

**4** Drain the rice and add to the vegetable mixture. Toss gently to combine. Cover and cook over low heat for 8 minutes or until the rice and cauliflower are tender. Try not to add extra liquid, as you don't want the end result to be wet. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside for 5 minutes.

**5** Gently toss the cashews and coriander leaves through the rice. Serve.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1690kJ (404Cal), **protein** 12g, **total fat** 15g (sat. fat 3g), **carbs** 52g, **fibre** 11g, **sodium** 264mg • **Carb exchanges** 3½ • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free option**

### COOK'S TIP

Allow any leftover biryani to cool before transferring to airtight containers. Cover and keep in the fridge for up to 2 days. Reheat portions in the microwave until piping hot.

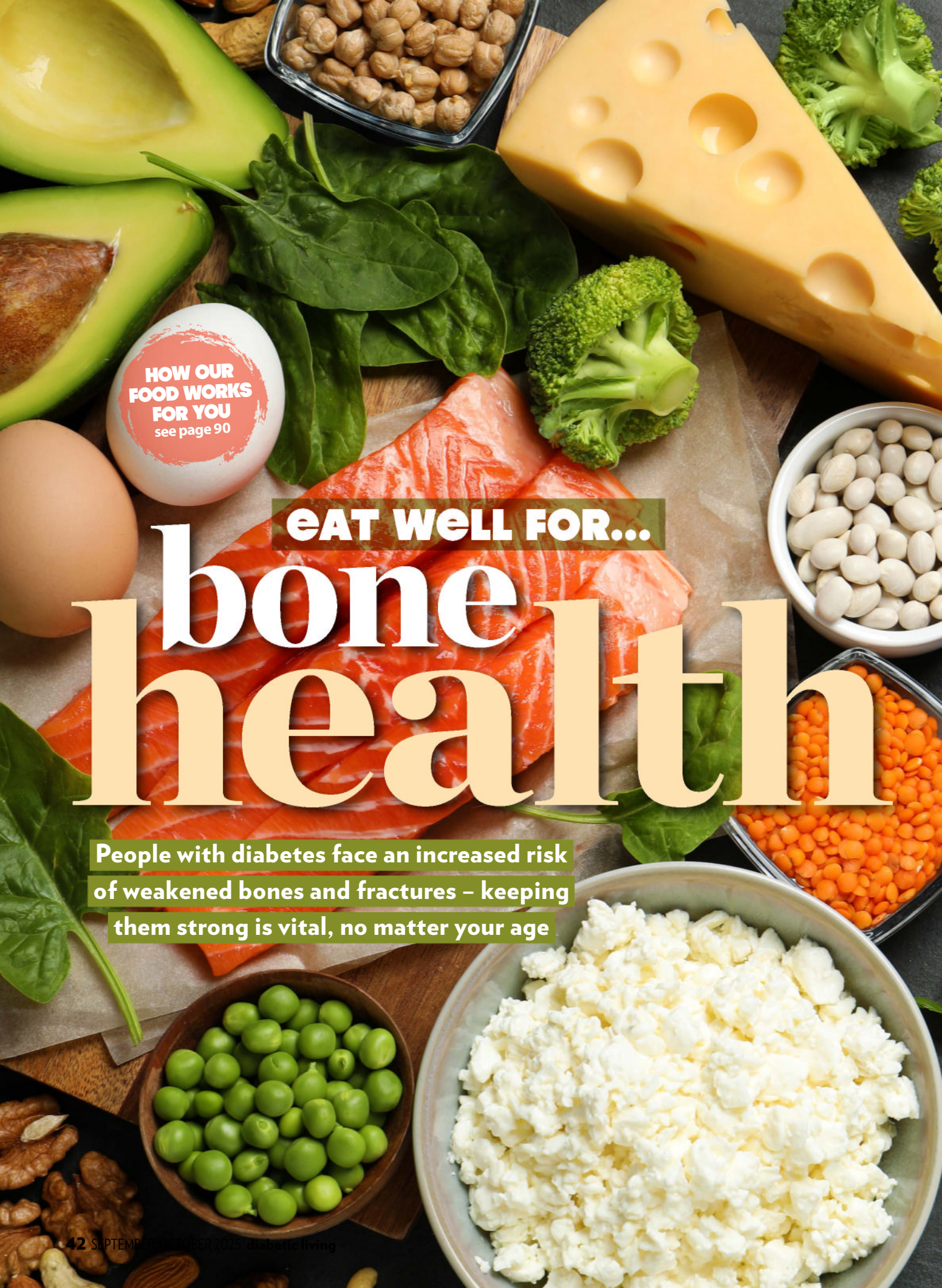


in season

Vegetable biryani  
*Recipe, opposite*







HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU  
see page 90

**EAT WELL FOR...**

# bone health

People with diabetes face an increased risk of weakened bones and fractures – keeping them strong is vital, no matter your age



**W**hile we all know that bones are a key part of the body, most of us don't appreciate just how important they are. As well as supporting our bodies and protecting delicate organs such as the brain, heart and lungs, bones also store minerals such as calcium. And bone marrow, found in the centre of some large bones, is where blood cells are made and stored.

All the more reason to keep our bones strong and healthy. Our bones naturally lose density over time, which increases the risk of osteoporosis, a disease where bones become weaker and more fragile and therefore more likely to break. This condition becomes more prevalent with age and especially in women post-menopause. But the good news is, we can protect our bones by making simple dietary and lifestyle choices.

## FOODS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR DIET

**DAIRY OR FORTIFIED-ALTERNATIVES:** Milk, cheese and yoghurt are some of the best sources of calcium, which is essential for maintaining bone density.

Live yoghurt also contains probiotic cultures which have anti-inflammatory effects and may help regulate bone remodelling. If you prefer plant-based alternatives, always look for fortified options which contain added calcium, vitamin D and other vitamins and minerals.

**GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES:** Vegetables like kale, broccoli and Brussels sprouts are high in calcium, magnesium and vitamin K, which are all essential for bone health. They also contain antioxidants that may help to reduce bone loss over time.

**NUTS AND SEEDS:** Almonds, chia seeds, sesame seeds and pumpkin seeds are rich in magnesium, a mineral that helps bones to absorb calcium. Walnuts also provide omega-3 fatty acids, which may reduce inflammation and support bone strength.

**SOY PRODUCTS:** These include calcium-set tofu, tempeh and edamame beans. As well as being a good source of calcium they contain isoflavones, which may help with bone formation and reduce bone resorption.

**FISH AND EGGS:** Tinned oily fish like salmon or sardines are high in calcium, because they contain small edible bones. Oily fish and eggs are also high in vitamin D. Foods rich in vitamin D help your body absorb calcium effectively.

## FOODS TO LIMIT

**SUGARY DRINKS:** Studies show sugary drinks can reduce bone density over time, increasing your risk of fractures. Limit sugary drinks and try drinking water or herbal teas instead.

**CAFFEINE:** Excessive caffeine can interfere with calcium absorption. Try decaffeinated tea or coffee, or stick to no more than three to four cups of coffee or tea per day.

**SALT:** Too much salt can cause increased calcium excretion, weakening bones. Try to limit processed foods which are often high in salt and try flavouring foods with herbs and spices rather than salt.

**Remember,** you don't have to totally exclude these foods from your diet, it's about small sustainable changes that you can maintain long term.

## What else can I do?

**STOP SMOKING** – Smoking increases your risk of osteoporosis by decreasing calcium absorption and new bone formation. Quitting smoking can reduce your risk of osteoporosis and other chronic diseases.

**EXERCISE REGULARLY** – In particular, try weight-bearing exercises, where your feet and legs support your body weight, as this helps to strengthen bones. Try walking, weight or strength training and sports like football and tennis.

**REDUCE ALCOHOL** – Studies show that people who drink daily have a higher risk of osteoporosis, and this risk increases with the amount of alcohol consumed.



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## PEANUT BUTTER NOODLES WITH TOFU & VEG

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 20 MINS

**SERVES** 4 (AS A MAIN)

2 tsp sesame oil  
4 cloves garlic, sliced  
320g green beans, sliced  
200g kale or cavolo nero, stalks removed, thinly sliced  
320g frozen edamame beans, cooked following packet directions  
450g firm tofu, cubed  
150g dried soba noodles  
Green shallots and red chilli, sliced, to serve (optional)  
1½ tbsp black and white sesame seeds, to serve

### SAUCE

2½ tbsp no-added-salt-or-sugar peanut butter  
1 tbsp tahini  
2 tbsp salt-reduced soy sauce or gluten-free soy sauce

**1** Heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan or wok over medium heat. Add the sliced garlic and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until just golden (be careful not to burn it). Add the green beans and kale, stirring frequently, until the kale wilts and the green beans are tender. Add the cooked edamame beans and cubed tofu to the pan. Toss to combine.

**2** Meanwhile, cook the noodles following packet instructions. Drain well.

**3** To make the sauce, put the peanut butter, tahini and soy sauce. Whisk well to combine. Add a splash of water to achieve a thick, pourable consistency.

**4** Add the cooked noodles and sauce to the pan with the vegetables. Cook, tossing, over medium heat until heated through and well combined. Sprinkle the noodles with the green shallots and sliced chilli, if using, and sesame seeds. Serve immediately.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 2320kJ (554Cal), **protein** 33g, **total fat** 27g (sat. fat 4g), **carbs** 38g, **fibre** 17g, **sodium** 783mg • **Carb exchanges** 2 ½ • **GI estimate** low  
• **Gluten-free option**









Combining two comforting family favourites – this recipe  
is guaranteed to be an instant crowd-pleaser.

HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU  
see page 90



RECIPES & PHOTOGRAPHY IMMEDIATE MEDIA;  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ALISON ROBERTS, SHANNON LAVERY (DIETITIAN)

# MAC 'N' CHEESE lasagne





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## MAC 'N' CHEESE LASAGNE

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 1 HOUR 20 MINS  
**SERVES** 8 (AS A MAIN)

2 tbs olive oil  
400g extra-lean beef mince  
50g smoked pancetta or gluten-free pancetta, chopped  
½ brown onion, finely chopped  
½ celery stick, finely chopped  
½ carrot, finely chopped  
1 clove garlic, crushed  
150ml red wine  
1 tbs no-added-salt tomato paste  
400g can no-added-salt chopped tomatoes  
250ml (1 cup) no-added-salt beef stock or gluten-free stock  
2 bay leaves  
1 sprig rosemary  
1 tsp caster sugar  
400g dried macaroni or gluten-free legume pasta  
80g (⅔ cup) grated reduced-fat mozzarella  
Few whole basil leaves, to serve (optional)  
315g snow peas, steamed, to serve  
2 bunches broccolini, steamed, to serve  
2 carrots, sliced, to serve

### CHEESE SAUCE

50g light margarine  
50g (⅓ cup) plain flour or gluten-free plain flour  
2 tsp English mustard or gluten-free mustard  
800ml skim milk  
Pinch ground nutmeg  
90g (¾ cup) grated reduced-fat cheddar cheese  
90g (¾ cup) grated reduced-fat mozzarella

**1** Heat half the oil in a large non-stick heavy-based frying pan or casserole dish over medium-high heat. Add the mince and pancetta and cook, stirring, for 4-5 minutes or until well browned. Use a slotted spoon to transfer to a bowl. Set aside.

**2** Add the remaining oil to the pan and heat over medium heat. Add the onion, celery and carrot and cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until vegetables soften. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Return the meat to the pan.

**3** Tip the wine into the pan. Bring to a simmer and cook until the mixture is reduced by half. Stir in the tomato paste, tomatoes, stock, bay leaves, rosemary and sugar. Simmer, covered, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes. Remove the lid and simmer, uncovered, for another 10 minutes until reduces.

**4** Meanwhile, to make the cheese sauce, melt the margarine in a saucepan over medium heat until foaming. Stir in the flour and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Stir in the mustard. Remove the pan from the heat and gradually whisk in the milk. Return the pan to the heat and simmer, whisking continuously, for 5-6 minutes, or until thick and smooth. Add the nutmeg and 80g of the cheddar. Season with pepper.

**5** Preheat oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Cook the macaroni in a large saucepan of boiling water for 5 minutes. Drain and return to the pan. Stir into the cheese sauce. Spread the ragu into the base of a large (28 x 22 x 5cm) rectangular baking dish. Spoon over the mac 'n' cheese and gently spread out using the back of a spoon to cover the ragu. Top with the remaining cheddar and the mozzarella. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until golden and bubbling. Set aside to rest for 5 minutes. Scatter over a few basil leaves to serve, if you like. Serve with the vegetables.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 2230kJ (533Cal),  
**protein** 35g, **total fat** 20g (sat. fat 9g), **carbs** 48g, **fibre** 7g, **sodium** 594mg • **Carb exchanges** 3 • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free option**

### LOWER-CARB OPTION

Replace the macaroni with 400g Atkins Lower Carb Penne, prepared following packet instructions.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 2210kJ (529Cal),  
**protein** 53g, **total fat** 20g (sat. fat 10g), **carbs** 25g, **fibre** 12g, **sodium** 617mg • **Carb exchanges** 1½ • **GI estimate** low • **Lower carb**

### COOK'S TIP

You can make the ragu up to the end of step 3. Set aside to cool completely. Freeze in an airtight container for up to 2 months. The lasagne will keep in the freezer for up to 3 months. Once made, set aside to cool. Cut into portions and pack into freezeproof airtight containers. Expel any air. Label, date and freeze.



HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU  
see page 90

# WE FEEL LIKE chicken tonight

Let the oven do most of the work with this no-fuss option  
that's perfect for a nutritious, vegie-packed weeknight meal.

GFO

## HEALTHY CHICKEN PASTA BAKE

PREP 10 MINS COOK 50 MINS  
SERVES 4 (AS A MAIN)

300g wholemeal penne pasta or  
gluten-free legume pasta  
2 tsp olive oil  
2 capsicum (1 yellow and 1  
orange), deseeded and chopped  
1 large zucchini, coarsely grated  
3 large cloves garlic, finely grated  
500ml passata  
1 tbsp smoked paprika  
1½ tsp salt-reduced vegetable  
stock powder or gluten-free  
stock powder  
Pinch ground chillies  
8 pitted kalamata olives, sliced  
400g skinless chicken breast fillets,  
trimmed of fat, cut into pieces

Large handful basil, chopped, plus  
extra, to serve  
100g reduced-fat ricotta  
30g (¼ cup) finely grated reduced-  
fat cheese

1 Preheat oven to 160°C (fan-  
forced). Cook the pasta in a large  
saucepan of boiling water following  
packet instructions.

2 Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large  
non-stick frying pan over medium  
heat. Add the capsicums and cook,  
stirring occasionally, for 8 minutes  
or until they start to soften. Add the  
zucchini and garlic. Cook, stirring,  
for 2 minutes. Stir in the passata,  
smoked paprika, stock powder,  
ground chillies and olives. Simmer  
for 5 minutes.

3 Drain the pasta, reserving the  
pasta water. Tip the pasta into  
the passata mixture along with  
the chicken, half a mug of the  
pasta water and the basil. Stir  
together well, then tip into a large  
baking dish.

4 Mix the ricotta and 5 tbsp of the  
pasta water in a small bowl. Spread  
across the top of the pasta. Sprinkle  
over the cheese. Bake for 35  
minutes. Scatter with a few extra  
basil leaves, if you like, and serve.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVE 2140kJ (512Cal),  
protein 41g, total fat 9g (sat. fat  
3g), carbs 58g, fibre 14g, sodium  
556mg • Carb exchanges 4 • GI  
estimate low • Gluten-free option







**HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU**  
see page 90

It's the surprising  
ingredient that has been  
flying off the shelves  
thanks to TikTok. Packed  
with protein and low in fat  
– cottage cheese is  
the versatile swap you  
need to try

**Lemon crepes with  
honeyed fruit**  
*Recipe, page 52*





Pancakes with  
maple syrup  
*Recipe, page 54*



*star ingredient*  
**COTTAGE**  
**Cheese**



**GFO**

## LEMON CREPES WITH HONEYED FRUIT

**PREP** 15 MINS (+ 1 HOUR CHILLING + 1 HOUR RESTING) **COOK** 15 MINS  
**SERVES** 6 (2 CREPES PER PERSON; AS AN OCCASIONAL DESSERT)

1 lemon  
 185ml (¾ cup) skim milk  
 75g (½ cup) plain flour or gluten-free plain flour  
 1 x 60g egg  
 2 tbsp light margarine, melted  
 1 tbsp sugar  
 ½ tsp vanilla essence  
 4 x 100g ripe yet firm nectarines, sliced or chopped  
 ¾ cup fresh or defrosted frozen blueberries  
 2 tbsp honey  
 250g (1 cup) cottage cheese  
 Icing sugar or gluten-free icing sugar, to serve (optional)

1 Remove 2 tsp zest from the lemon and squeeze 2 tbsp juice. Set aside.

2 To make the crepe batter, put the milk, flour, egg, melted margarine, sugar, vanilla and lemon zest in a

blender. Cover and blend or process until smooth. Transfer to a bowl; cover and chill at least 1 hour (or up to 24 hours).

3 Meanwhile, put the nectarines, blueberries, lemon juice and 1 tbsp honey in a bowl. Toss to combine. Set aside for 45-60 minutes before serving.

4 Put the cottage cheese and remaining 1 tbsp honey in a small blender. Cover and blend for 1 minute or until very smooth. Cover and chill until ready to serve.

5 Lightly spray a large non-stick frying pan with cooking spray. Heat over medium-high. Spoon in 2 tbsp of the crepe batter. Lift and tilt the pan to spread the batter evenly. Cook 30-60 seconds or until the bottom is light brown. Loosen with a rubber spatula and turn the crepe. Cook for 10-15 seconds or just until set. Transfer to a sheet of waxed paper. Repeat with the remaining batter (see Cook's tip).

6 To serve, spread about 1 tbsp cottage cheese mixture across the centre of each crepe. Top with a little fruit mixture and fold. Dust with icing sugar, if using.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 880kJ (211Cal), **protein** 10g, **total fat** 5g (sat. fat 2g), **carbs** 30g, **fibre** 2g, **sodium** 135mg • **Carb exchanges** 2 • **GI estimate** medium • **Gluten-free option**

**GFO**

## FRUIT & CHEESE BREAKFAST BOWL

**PREP** 10 MINS  
**SERVES** 1 (AS A BREAKFAST)

180g (¾ cup) cottage cheese  
 ¾ cup fresh or defrosted frozen raspberries, blueberries, and/or blackberries  
 1 kiwifruit, peeled and sliced  
 30g (¼ cup) Carman's Protein Rich Granola or gluten-free granola  
 2 dried apricots, finely chopped  
 1 tsp chia seeds

1 Spread the cottage cheese over a wide, shallow bowl. Top with the berries, kiwifruit, granola, apricots and chia seeds. Serve.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1790kJ (428Cal), **protein** 31g, **total fat** 11g (sat. fat 3g), **carbs** 42g, **fibre** 12g, **sodium** 356mg • **Carb exchanges** 3 • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free option**

### COOK'S TIP

Stack finished crepes between waxed paper to keep them from sticking together. The crepes may be made ahead, cooled, packaged in a freezer bag, and frozen for up to 3 months. Thaw crepes at room temperature or in the fridge before serving.

### COOK'S TIP

Cottage cheese is a low-kilojoule, high-protein food rich in calcium, phosphorus, and B vitamins, supporting bone health, energy production, and brain function. With just 7g of carbs per 120g serve, it helps keep you full, supports weight management, and has minimal impact on blood glucose levels – making it ideal for people with diabetes.





## focus on

### Fruit & cheese breakfast bowl

*Recipe, page  
opposite*





## focus on

GFO

### PANCAKES WITH MAPLE SYRUP

**PREP** 15 MIN **COOK** 15 MINS

**SERVES** 5 (3 PER SERVE, AS A BREAKFAST)

6 x 60g eggs, lightly whisked  
450g cottage cheese  
2 tbsp honey  
2 tbsp light margarine, melted  
2 tsp vanilla essence  
1 tsp lemon zest  
225g (1½ cups) plain flour or gluten-free plain flour  
1 tsp baking powder or gluten-free baking powder  
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
1¼ cups warm mixed berries, to serve  
2½ tbsp sugar-free maple syrup, to serve

**1** Put the eggs, cottage cheese, honey, margarine, vanilla and lemon zest in a large bowl. Mix until well combined. Add the flour, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda. Stir just until moistened (the batter should be slightly lumpy).

**2** Pour about ¼ cup batter onto a hot, lightly greased flat cast iron grill or heavy-based frying pan over medium heat. Cook for 2 minutes on each side or until pancakes surface are bubbly and edges are slightly dry and golden on each side. Transfer to a plate and cover loosely with foil to keep warm. Repeat with the remaining batter to make 15 pancakes in total.

**3** Serve the pancakes warm with maple syrup and berries.

#### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1820kJ (435Cal), **protein** 25g, **total fat** 12g (sat. fat 5g), **carbs** 54g, **fibre** 3g, **sodium** 627mg  
• **Carb exchanges** 3 ½ • **GI estimate** high • **Gluten-free option**

### SKIP THE BLEND

We skipped blending the cottage cheese here. The curds are visible, but the cheese flavour doesn't come through. Instead, the tender pancakes are subtly sweet with a creamy texture and a brightness from the lemon. Shoot for smaller cakes and keep a gentle hand when flipping.

### COTTAGE CHEESE SCONES

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 20 MINS

**MAKES** 12 SCONES (1 PER SERVE) AS A SNACK

415g (2¾ cups) plain flour  
1 tbsp baking powder  
1½ tsp caster sugar  
125g light margarine  
250g (1 cup) cottage cheese  
185ml (¾ cup) skim milk

**1** Preheat oven to 210°C (fan-forced). Line a baking tray with non-stick baking paper.

**2** Put the flour, baking powder and sugar in a large bowl. Use a fork to cut in the margarine until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

**3** Put the cottage cheese and milk in a medium bowl and mix until well combined. Add the cottage cheese mixture to the flour mixture. Using a fork, stir until just moistened.

**4** Drop the dough into 12 mounds onto the lined tray. Bake 15-18 minutes or until golden. Remove the scones from the baking tray and serve warm.

#### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 790kJ (189Cal), **protein** 7g, **total fat** 5g (sat. fat 2g), **carbs** 28g, **fibre** 1g, **sodium** 192mg  
• **Carb exchanges** 2 • **GI estimate** high







Cottage cheese scones  
*Recipe, page opposite*



GFO

## MUHAMMARA

**PREP** 10 MINS

**MAKE** 6 SERVINGS (¼ CUP/PER SERVE, AS A SNACK)

**40g (¼ cup) fine dry breadcrumbs or gluten-free breadcrumbs (see Cook's tip)**

**40g (¼ cup) toasted walnuts**

**¼ red onion, finely chopped**

**1 small clove garlic, halved**

**½ tsp ground cumin**

**¼ tsp chilli flakes**

**150g drained roasted red peppers**

**125g (½ cup) cottage cheese**

**2 tsp pomegranate molasses (see Cook's tip)**

**½ tsp fresh lemon juice**

**Chopped flat-leaf parsley, to serve  
Carrot & celery sticks, to serve**

**1** Put the breadcrumbs, walnuts, onion, garlic, cumin and chilli flakes in a food processor or high-power blender. Cover and pulse until finely chopped. Add the roasted peppers; cover and pulse until combined. Add the cottage cheese, pomegranate molasses, and lemon juice. Cover and pulse until mixture reaches desired consistency.

**2** Transfer the dip to a serving bowl or platter. Sprinkle with parsley and, if desired, drizzle with olive oil and/or additional pomegranate molasses. Serve with the vegetable sticks.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE (Muhammara only)**

**463kJ (111Cal), protein 5g, total fat 5g (sat. fat 1g), carbs 11g, fibre 1g, sodium 95mg • Carb**

**exchanges ½ • GI estimate medium • Gluten-free option**

**• Lower carb**

**PER SERVE (Muhammara served**

**with 1 cup mixed celery and**

**carrot sticks) 587kJ (140Cal), protein 5g, total fat 5g (sat. fat 1g),**

**carbs 15g, fibre 4g, sodium**

**186mg • Carb exchanges 1 • GI**

**estimate low • Gluten-free option**

### BREADCRUMBS

Buy fine dry breadcrumbs or make your own: Use slightly stale dry bread slices and bake in a 150°C (fan-forced) for about 10 minutes or until slightly crisp. Use a food processor to pulse into slightly coarse or fine crumbs. For ½ cup fine dry crumbs, use two slices of bread.

### POMEGRANATE MOLASSES

Pomegranate molasses is made by cooking down a mixture of pomegranate juice, sugar, water and citrus juice or citric acid into a thick, sticky reduction (think balsamic vinegar with a tart pomegranate flavour). Look for it at Middle Eastern grocery stores and specialty shops. If you can't find pomegranate molasses, substitute a mixture of 1 tbsp molasses and 1½ tsp balsamic vinegar to imitate the sour-sweet taste.

RECIPES & PHOTOGRAPHY DOTDASH MEREDITH. ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ALISON ROBERTS, SHANNON LAVERY (DIETITIAN)





## DID YOU KNOW?

For a brighter, spicier take on hummus, try muhammara, a rosy Middle Eastern spread traditionally made from roasted peppers, ground walnuts and breadcrumbs. Our version incorporates creamy cottage cheese, fragrant spices and aromatics.

**Muhammara**  
*Recipe, page  
opposite*



**HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU**  
see page 90

Savour each bite and immerse yourself in  
flavours without distraction. It's mindful,  
liberating and quietly luxurious

# COOKING FOR one





going solo



Easy seafood chowder  
Recipe, page 60



GFO

## EASY SEAFOOD CHOWDER

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 20 MINS

**SERVES** 1 (AS A MAIN)

150g Zerella Spud Lite Potatoes, finely chopped  
 2 tsp olive oil  
 1 celery stick, chopped  
 1 eschalot, finely chopped  
 1 clove garlic, grated  
 1 tbsp plain flour or gluten-free flour  
 200ml skim milk  
 100ml salt-reduced chicken stock or gluten-free stock  
 160g small green prawns, peeled and deveined  
 75g (½ cup) frozen corn & peas  
 Zest and juice 1 lemon  
 2 tsp roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley

**1** Put the potatoes in a small saucepan of water. Cover and bring to the boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-high and simmer, partially covered, for 5-6 minutes or until just tender. Drain and set aside. Wipe out the saucepan.

**2** Heat the oil in the saucepan over medium heat. Add the celery and eschalot and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 30 seconds.

**3** Add the flour to the pan. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Remove the pan from the heat and gradually whisk in the milk and the stock. Return pan to the heat and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until the sauce thickens.

**4** Add the prawns, potatoes and corn and pea mix to the saucepan. Simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in the zest and juice, adding up to 50ml water if too thick. Stir in the parsley. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Serve.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 2080kJ (498Cal), **protein** 36g, **total fat** 12g (sat. fat 3g), **carbs** 53g, **fibre** 12g, **sodium** 684mg • **Carb exchanges** 3½ • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free option**

GFO LCO

## VEGIE-LOADED FLATBREAD

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 15 MINS

**SERVES** 1 (AS A MAIN)

½ small red onion, sliced into thin wedges  
 2 tsp olive oil  
 9 cherry tomatoes  
 85g (½ cup) drained can salt-reduced chickpeas  
 1 small clove garlic, crushed  
 2 tsp tahini  
 Zest and juice ½ lemon  
 1 flatbread or gluten-free flatbread  
 5 mixed pitted olives  
 10g reduced-fat feta, crumbled  
 Small handful basil, shredded

**1** Preheat grill on high. Spread the onion wedges out on a baking tray and drizzle with 1 tsp of the oil. Grill for 3-5 minutes, turning halfway through. Add the tomatoes to the tray and season with freshly ground black pepper. Grill for a further 5 minutes or until the tomatoes are juicy and popping.

**2** Put the chickpeas in a small non-stick frying pan with the garlic and remaining 1 tsp oil over medium heat. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes. Use a potato masher to crush the chickpeas. Stir through the tahini, lemon zest and juice along with 2 tbsp water. Season with freshly ground black pepper.

**3** Warm your flatbread under the grill for 2-3 minutes. Top with the crushed chickpeas, then the tomato and onion mixture. Top with the olives, feta and basil.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 2330kJ (557Cal), **protein** 16g, **total fat** 32g (sat. fat 6g), **carbs** 45g, **fibre** 12g, **sodium** 1040mg • **Carb exchanges** 3 • **GI estimate** medium • **Gluten-free option**

### LOWER-CARB OPTION

Replace the flatbread with 1 lower carb wrap, such as Woolworths Lower Carb Wholemeal Wrap.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1910kJ (457Cal), **protein** 19g, **total fat** 30g (sat. fat 6g), **carbs** 18g, **fibre** 21g, **sodium** 708mg • **Carb exchanges** 1 • **GI estimate** low • **Lower carb**





going solo

Vegie-loaded  
flatbread  
*Recipe, page opposite*



*Dining solo doesn't mean missing  
out on healthy flavours with dishes  
like this loaded flatbread*





Spicy teriyaki  
prawns & sesame  
fried rice

GFO LCO

## EGG & AVOCADO OPEN SANDWICH

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 10 MINS  
**SERVES** 1

2 x 60g eggs  
1 small ripe avocado  
Juice 1 lime  
2 slices rye bread or gluten-free  
wholegrain bread  
2 tsp sriracha or gluten-free  
sriracha  
Handful pea shoots or sprouts,  
to serve

**1** Bring a medium saucepan of water to the boil. Add the eggs and cook for 8-9 minutes or until hard-boiled.

**2** Meanwhile, halve the avocado and scoop the flesh into a small bowl. Add the lime juice. Season well with pepper. Use a fork to mash until smooth.

**3** When the eggs are cooked, run under cold water for 2 minutes before removing the shells. Spread the avocado on the rye bread. Slice the eggs into thin rounds and place on top of the avocado. Drizzle some sriracha over the eggs. Scatter the pea shoots or sprouts on top and add a good grinding of black pepper.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 2130kJ (510Cal),  
**protein** 25g, **total fat** 26g (sat. fat 5g), **carbs** 39g, **fibre** 14g, **sodium** 633mg • **Carb exchanges** 2½  
• **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free**  
**option**

GFO

## SPICY TERIYAKI PRAWNS & SESAME FRIED RICE

**PREP** 5 MINS **COOK** 10 MINS  
**SERVES** 1 (AS A MAIN)

2 tsp olive oil  
2 baby bok choy, halved  
2 green shallots, cut into  
3cm lengths  
1 x 60g egg, lightly whisked  
½ x 125g tub microwave brown  
basmati rice, heated following  
packet instructions  
1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds  
150g raw king prawns, peeled  
and deveined  
1 tbsp teriyaki sauce or gluten-  
free teriyaki sauce  
2 tsp sriracha or gluten-free  
sriracha

**1** Heat 1 tsp of the oil in a wok over high heat. Add the bok choy and green shallots. Stir-fry for 2 minutes.  
**2** Add the egg to the wok and cook,

stirring, for 1-2 minutes or until scrambled. Add the rice and 3 tsp sesame seeds to the wok. Cook, tossing, for 2 minutes or until piping hot. Set aside.

**3** Heat the remaining oil in a medium non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the prawns and cook for 2 minutes or until the prawns are just cooked. Add the teriyaki sauce and sriracha. Toss to combine and reduces to coat the prawns.

**4** Put the vegetable rice in a serving bowl. Top with the prawns. Sprinkle with the remaining sesame seeds and serve.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 2060kJ (493Cal),  
**protein** 33g, **total fat** 23g (sat. fat 5g), **carbs** 36g, **fibre** 7g, **sodium** 1320mg • **Carb exchanges** 2½  
• **GI estimate** medium • **Gluten-  
free option**



Egg & avocado  
open sandwich

Recipe, page  
opposite

**LOWER-CARB OPTION**

Replace the rye bread with 2 slices of low-carb bread, such as Burgen Lower Carb High Protein Sunflower & Linseed Bread.

**NUTRITIONAL INFO**

**PER SERVE** 2240kJ (536Cal),  
**protein** 39g, **total fat** 36g  
(sat. fat 6g), **carbs** 5g, **fibre**  
22g, **sodium** 490mg • **Carb**  
**exchanges** ½ • **GI estimate**  
low • **Lower carb**





# **FRESH** fries

Use your air-fryer to rustle up these colourful snacks, starters and light lunches, or make a few for a feast in the garden

**HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU**  
see page 90





air-fryer



Spring vegetable &  
flatbread platter with  
dill & mustard dip  
*Recipe, page 66*



## air-fryer

GFO

### **SPRING VEGETABLE & FLATBREAD PLATTER WITH DILL & MUSTARD DIP**

**PREP** 20 MINS **COOK** 10 MINS

**SERVES** 6 (AS A SNACK OR STARTER)

90g ( $\frac{1}{3}$  cup) 97% fat-free mayonnaise or gluten-free mayonnaise  
1 clove garlic, crushed  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  bunch dill, finely chopped, plus a few extra sprigs, to serve  
3 (66g each) pitas or gluten-free pitas  
200g reduced-fat Greek-style natural yoghurt  
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard or gluten-free mustard  
1 tbsp drained and rinsed capers, patted dry and finely chopped  
1 eschalot, peeled, halved and finely chopped  
1 tsp honey  
200g sugar snap peas  
150g asparagus, woody ends trimmed, sliced into 5cm pieces  
300g fennel bulb, trimmed, sliced into thin wedges  
150g radishes, halved or quartered, if large  
150g baby (Dutch) carrots

**1** Preheat air-fryer to 160°C. Combine 1 tbsp of the mayonnaise with half the garlic and 1 tbsp of dill in a small bowl. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Brush the mayonnaise mixture over the pitas. Put in the air-fryer basket and cook for 3 minutes, turning the pita over and cook for a further 3 minutes or until just golden. If still pale, cook for a further 2 minutes.

**2** Meanwhile, put the remaining mayonnaise, garlic and dill in a small bowl. Add the yogurt, mustard, capers, shallot and honey. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Stir until well combined. Transfer to a small serving bowl.

**3** Slice the warm pitas into strips and arrange on a serving platter with the peas, asparagus, fennel wedges, radishes, baby carrots and the bowl of dip. Top with some extra dill sprigs. Serve.

#### **NUTRITIONAL INFO**

**PER SERVE** 750kJ (179Cal), **protein** 8g, **total fat** 2g (sat. fat 1g), **carbs** 29g, **fibre** 7g, **sodium** 438mg • **Carb exchanges** 2 • **GI estimate** medium • **Gluten-free option**

GFO

LC

### **GREEK-STYLE BAKED FETA**

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 20 MINS

**SERVES** 8 (AS A SIDE OR STARTER)

3 large ripe tomatoes  
1 clove garlic, crushed  
200g reduced-fat feta  
1 large green chilli, sliced  
1 tsp roughly chopped oregano leaves  
4 tbsp olive oil  
2 (66g each) wholemeal pita or gluten-free, sliced to serve

**1** Cut 1 tomato through the middle, then cut two slices from the centre and set aside. Scoop the seeds from the rest of the tomato. Grate the flesh, discarding the skin. Deseed and grate the remaining tomatoes in the same way, then mix the grated flesh with the garlic. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Spoon into a 16cm baking dish.

**2** Preheat the air-fryer to 180°C. Sit the feta in the garlicky tomatoes and top with the sliced tomatoes, chilli, oregano and oil. Bake in the air-fryer for 15-20 minutes or until the feta is heated through and turning golden at the edges.

**3** Serve the baked feta warm with the pitas on the side for dunking.

#### **NUTRITIONAL INFO**

**PER SERVE** 830kJ (199Cal), **protein** 8g, **total fat** 13g (sat. fat 4g), **carbs** 10g, **fibre** 2g, **sodium** 356mg • **Carb exchanges**  $\frac{1}{2}$  • **GI estimate** high • **Gluten-free option** • **Lower carb**





**Greek-style  
baked feta**  
*Recipe, page  
opposite*



air-fryer

GFO LC

## SLOW-COOKED VINE TOMATOES WITH GARLIC

PREP 5 MINS COOK 1 HOUR

SERVES 4 (AS A SIDE)

300g cherry vine tomatoes

1 or 2 small garlic bulbs, cut in half to expose the flesh

100ml olive oil

100g sourdough bread or gluten-free bread, torn into pieces, to serve

1 Preheat air-fryer to 120°C. Put the tomatoes and garlic in a baking dish that provides a snug fit. Season well with freshly ground black pepper. Pour over the oil and bake for 1 hour.

2 Squash the garlic and stir into the oil. Eat warm with crusty bread.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVE 615kJ

(147Cal), **protein** 2g,

**total fat** 12g (sat. fat

2g), **carbs** 8g, **fibre** 2g,

**sodium** 71mg

• Carb exchanges ½

• GI estimate low

• Gluten-free option

• Lower carb

### COOK'S TIP

Once cooled, will keep chilled in an airtight container for two weeks.



GFO LC

## HERBED BROAD BEAN & FETA CROSTINI WITH ASPARAGUS

PREP 5 MINS COOK 10 MINS

SERVES 4 (AS A STARTER)

160g broad beans  
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
50g reduced-fat feta, crumbled  
1 tsp honey  
Squeeze fresh lemon juice, plus extra, for the asparagus  
Large handful of dill fronds, plus extra, to serve  
4 thin (10g each) baguette slices or gluten-free baguette  
1 clove garlic, halved  
4 asparagus spears, trimmed, blanched, to serve

1 Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil. Add the broad beans and cook for 5-6 minutes or until tender. Immediately plunge into a bowl of ice-cold water. Squeeze the beans from their pods and transfer to the bowl of a small food processor. Add 1½ tbsp olive oil, feta, honey, lemon juice and dill fronds to the processor. Season with black pepper and process

until smooth, adding 1-2 tbsp water if needed to get a smooth purée.

2 Meanwhile, brush the baguette slices with the remaining oil. Heat the air-fryer to 200°C. Put the baguette slices in the air-fryer basket and cook for 5 minutes, turning halfway through, until golden and toasted. Rub with the cut side of a halved garlic clove.

3 Finely chop the blanched

asparagus spears and toss in a squeeze of lemon juice. Spread the purée over the crostini and top with the asparagus and some extra dill. Any leftover purée will keep chilled for up to two days.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

PER SERVE 732kJ (175Cal), **protein** 8g, **total fat** 11g (sat. fat 3g), **carbs** 8g, **fibre** 4g, **sodium** 190mg • **Carb exchanges** ½ • **GI estimate** high  
• **Gluten-free option** • **Lower carb**







**GFO**

## **SESAME, HALOUMI & ZUCCHINI FRITTERS WITH CHILLI HONEY DRIZZLE**

**PREP** 15 mins (+ 30 mins draining)

**COOK** 20 mins

**SERVES** 8 (as a snack or starter)

2 medium zucchini, grated  
30g self-raising flour or gluten-free self-raising flour  
20g rice flour  
2 tbsp toasted sesame seeds  
¼ tsp ground white pepper  
2 tsp mint leaves, finely chopped  
80g reduced-fat haloumi, grated  
2 x 60g eggs  
2 green shallots, finely sliced

### **CHILLI HONEY DRIZZLE**

2 tbsp honey  
Pinch chilli flakes  
Zest of 2 lemons

**1** To make the chilli drizzle, put the honey, chilli flakes, lemon zest and 2 tbsp water in a small saucepan. Cook, stirring, over medium heat for 3 minutes or until bubbling and syrupy.

**2** Put the zucchini in a sieve over the sink and set aside for 15 minutes to allow some of the liquid to drain from the zucchini. Use your hands to squeeze out the liquid – you want them as dry as possible.

**3** Combine the flours, sesame seeds and white pepper in a large bowl. Add the mint, haloumi and zucchini. Toss lightly to combine. Add the eggs and green shallots. Mix until you have a thick batter.

**4** Preheat air-fryer to 180°C. Line the fryer basket with non-stick baking paper. Add 2 heaped tbsp of the batter for each fritter, flattening them down with a spatula, and cook for 10 minutes. Flip them over and press down with the spatula, then cook for another 5-8 minutes or until golden and cooked all the way through.

**5** Serve the fritters with the chilli honey drizzle.

### **NUTRITIONAL INFO**

**PER SERVE** 480kJ (115Cal), **protein** 6g, **total fat** 5g (sat. fat 2g), **carbs** 12g, **fibre** 1g, **sodium** 172mg  
• Carb exchanges 1 • GI estimate medium • **Gluten-free option**



air-fryer



Roast fennel & bread gratin  
*Recipe, page 72*



**GFO**

## ROAST FENNEL & BREAD GRATIN

**PREP** 15 MINS **COOK** 35 MINS **SERVES** 4 (AS A SIDE)

2 small fennel bulbs, bases trimmed, bulbs cut lengthways into 1cm-thick wedges  
 1 tbsp olive oil  
 2 large thyme sprigs, leaves picked  
 2 thick (45g) slices sourdough or gluten-free bread  
 100ml skim milk  
 2 tbsp white wine  
 2 tbsp grated parmesan, plus extra to serve  
 150ml Carnation Light Cooking Cream  
 Pinch ground nutmeg  
 Handful mixed soft herbs, roughly chopped (we used parsley and tarragon)

**1** Preheat the air-fryer to 200°C. Put the fennel, oil and thyme in a bowl. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Toss to combine. Put the fennel in the air-fryer basket and roast for 12-15 minutes or until golden.

**2** Meanwhile, tear the sourdough into chunks and place into a bowl. Pour the milk and wine over the bread. Set aside. Put the parmesan and cream in a small bowl. Add the nutmeg and season with freshly ground black pepper.

**3** Transfer the fennel from the basket into a baking dish that will fit in the fryer. Add the soaked bread and mix. Pour over the cream mixture and half the herbs. Stir to coat the bread and fennel. Grate over a little extra parmesan. Turn the fryer down to 180°C and bake the fennel until golden, bubbling and crisp at the edges. Top with the remaining herbs. Serve.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 937kJ (224Cal), **protein** 7g, **total fat** 12g (sat. fat 5g), **carbs** 19g, **fibre** 3g, **sodium** 243mg  
 • Carb exchanges 1 ½ • GI estimate low • Gluten-free option

## FENNEL BAKED EGGS

Tip any leftover gratin into a smaller baking dish, make a few gaps in the mixture using a spoon and crack an egg into each. Heat the air-fryer to 150°C.

Bake the gratin for 10 minutes or until the egg white has set and the fennel is cooked through.

**GF**

## CRISPY SWEET POTATOES WITH CHICKPEAS & TAHINI YOGHURT

**PREP** 20 MINS **COOK** 50 MINS **SERVES** 8 (AS A SIDE)

4 small (200g each) orange sweet potatoes  
 2 tbsp olive oil  
 1 large clove garlic, crushed  
 1 eschalot, finely chopped  
 400g can no-added-salt chickpeas, rinsed and drained  
 75g baby spinach leaves  
 1 bunch dill, finely chopped  
 Zest and juice 1 lemon  
 1½ tbsp pine nuts, toasted  
 1 pomegranate, seeds removed, or 1/3 cup 50% less sugar raisins

### TAHINI YOGHURT

3 tbsp reduced-fat Greek-style natural yoghurt  
 2 tbsp tahini

**1** Preheat air-fryer to 200°C. Use a fork to pierce the potatoes a few times. Cook for 50 minutes.

**2** Meanwhile, heat 1 tbsp oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add the garlic and eschalot and cook, stirring often, for 3-4 minutes or until soften. Stir in the chickpeas. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute, or until warmed through. Add the spinach and cook, stirring, for 1-2 minutes or until the spinach wilts. Stir in the dill.

**3** Whisk together the lemon juice, zest and remaining oil in a small bowl. Add to the chickpea mixture and season with freshly ground black pepper. Use a potato masher to gently mash the chickpeas until slightly crushed.

**4** Combine the yoghurt and tahini in a small bowl. Season with freshly ground black pepper.

**5** Split the potatoes open lengthways. Fill with the bean mixture, spoon over the tahini yoghurt. Top with the pine nuts and pomegranate seeds.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 970kJ (232Cal), **protein** 6g, **total fat** 10g (sat. fat 1g), **carbs** 24g, **fibre** 9g, **sodium** 43mg • Carb exchanges 1 ½ • GI estimate low • Gluten free





air-fryer

Crispy sweet potatoes  
with chickpeas &  
tahini yoghurt  
*Recipe, page opposite*

*Make it vegan by switching the  
yogurt for a dairy-free version.*





**GFO LCO**

## ROASTED TOMATOES & CREAMY TAHINI YOGHURT

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 15 MINS  
**SERVES** 8 (AS A SIDE OR STARTER)

600g mixed heritage or heirloom tomatoes  
5 small cloves garlic, thinly sliced  
4 thyme or oregano sprigs  
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus a drizzle, to serve  
400g reduced-fat Greek-style natural yoghurt  
3 tbsp tahini  
Pinch chilli flakes (optional)  
240g sourdough baguette, or gluten-free bread, torn into pieces

**1** Preheat the air-fryer to 180°C. Put the tomatoes on a baking tray lined with non-stick baking paper. Scatter over the garlic and thyme, reserving a few thyme leaves. Drizzle with 1 tbsp oil and season with freshly ground black pepper. Roast for 12-15 minutes or until the tomatoes have softened but still hold their shape.

**2** Meanwhile, combine the yoghurt and tahini in a small bowl. Chill until needed.

**3** Spread the cold yoghurt mixture over a large serving plate. Spoon over the roasted tomatoes, garlic and thyme. Pour over the roasting juices. Sprinkle with a pinch of chilli flakes, if you like, and the reserved thyme. Drizzle with the remaining oil and serve with bread.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 956kJ (229Cal), **protein** 8g, **total fat** 11g (sat. fat 2g), **carbs** 20g, **fibre** 3g, **sodium** 196mg  
• **Carb exchanges** 1½ • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free option**

### COOK'S TIP

Add tahini to the yoghurt for a rich, nutty flavour.

**GF LC**

## ZUCCHINI & TAHINI DIP

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 20 MINS  
**SERVES** 2 (AS A SNACK)

2 large zucchini, washed  
1 small clove garlic, crushed  
1 tbsp tahini  
Juice ½ lemon  
1 tbsp reduced-fat Greek-style natural yoghurt  
Handful mint, leaves picked and chopped  
½ tsp olive oil, to serve  
1 cup carrot sticks, to serve  
1 cup celery sticks, to serve

**1** Preheat air-fryer to 200°C. Place the zucchini in the air-fryer basket and bake for 20 minutes until soft when pricked with a fork. Remove from the air-fryer and set aside to cool completely.

**2** Put the zucchini in a small food processor. Add the garlic and blitz to a fluffy texture. Add the tahini and lemon juice and season with freshly ground black pepper. Blitz again. Transfer the dip to a bowl and stir through the yoghurt and a little of the mint. Drizzle with the oil and scatter over the remaining mint. Serve.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 710kJ (170Cal), **protein** 6g, **total fat** 9g (sat. fat 1g), **carbs** 11g, **fibre** 8g, **sodium** 113mg • **Carb exchanges** ½ • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten free** • **Lower carb**



Roasted tomatoes &  
creamy tahini yoghurt  
*Recipe, page opposite*



**LOWER-CARB OPTION**

Omit the breads and serve a selection of veggie sticks, such as 100g snow peas, 2 large carrots and 2 celery stalks sliced into sticks.

**NUTRITIONAL INFO**

**PER SERVE** 737kJ (176Cal), **protein** 6g, **total fat** 11g (sat. fat 2g), **carbs** 10g, **fibre** 4g, **sodium** 88mg • **Carb exchanges** ½ • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten free** • **Lower carb**



## MUSHROOM & SAGE SAUSAGE ROLLS

**PREP** 20 MINS **COOK** 50 MINS

**SERVES** 10 (AS A SNACK OR STARTER)

250g shiitake or portobello mushrooms  
3 tbsp olive oil  
2 leeks, finely chopped  
2 large cloves garlic, crushed  
1 tbsp finely chopped sage leaves  
1 tbsp white or red miso paste  
2 tsp Dijon mustard  
30g hazelnuts, roasted, very finely chopped  
70g fresh white breadcrumbs  
1 sheet 25% reduced-fat puff pastry, thawed  
Plain flour, for dusting  
Skim milk, to glaze  
½ cup no-added-salt tomato sauce, to serve  
2 tbsp mustard, to serve

**1** Put the mushrooms in a small food processor. Pulse until very finely chopped. Put half the oil in a large non-stick frying pan over low heat. Add the leeks and cook, stirring often, for 15 minutes or until softens and golden brown. Scrape the leeks out of the pan into a bowl. Set aside to cool slightly.

**2** Heat the remaining oil in the frying pan over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring often, for 10 minutes. Add the garlic, sage, miso and mustard and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Set aside to cool slightly.

**3** Transfer the mushroom mixture into the bowl with the leeks. Add the hazelnuts and breadcrumbs. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Mix until you have a slightly stiff mixture.

**4** Put the pastry on a floured surface and roll out so that one side measures 43cm. Mould the mushroom mixture into a sausage shape down the centre of the pastry, then bring the pastry up around the filling and seal along the seam with a fork. Cut into ten pieces.



RECIPES & PHOTOGRAPHY IMMEDIATE MEDIA; ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ALISON ROBERTS, SHANNON LAVERY (DIETITIAN)



**5** Line the air-fryer basket with non-stick baking paper and preheat to 200°C. Arrange the rolls on the baking paper and brush with milk. Bake for 20-30 minutes or until golden and cooked through. Serve with the mustard and tomato sauce.

#### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 706kJ (169Cal), **protein** 5g, **total fat** 8g (sat. fat 2g), **carbs** 17g, **fibre** 3g, **sodium** 288mg  
• **Carb exchanges** 1 • **GI estimate** medium

#### COOK'S TIP

You can make the sausage rolls up to the end of step 4. Freeze in an airtight container for up to 3 months. Cook frozen for 30-40 minutes.





A top-down view of two rustic ceramic plates filled with gnocchi in a tomato sauce, topped with grated cheese and fresh basil. A glass of white wine sits on a blue speckled tablecloth. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

This sun-drenched region has it all – culture, golden sandy beaches, sparkling blue seas and famously healthy food. Some of the best dishes are the simplest, so have a go at making our versions of these classic dishes for a Mediterranean escape.

Gnocchi Pomodoro  
*Recipe, opposite*

HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU  
see page 90

# Best of the blue zone



## GNOCCHI POMODORO

**PREP** 40 MIN **COOK** 1 HOUR 25 MINS  
**SERVES** 8 (AS A MAIN)

1.5 kg Zerella Spud Lite Potatoes  
375g pasta flour (type 00), plus  
extra, for dusting  
1 x 60g egg, lightly whisked  
Semolina, for dusting

### SAUCE

3 x 400g cans no-added-salt  
chopped tomatoes  
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus  
drizzle, to serve  
1 brown onion, finely chopped  
1 clove garlic, crushed  
¼ tsp chilli flakes  
1 tsp sugar  
Bunch of herbs, tied together  
(oregano, thyme and bay leaves  
all work well)  
Handful basil, leaves picked  
and torn  
1 tbsp finely grated parmesan,  
per person, to serve

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (fan-forced). Place the potatoes on a baking tray and roast for 50-60 minutes or until tender when a knife is inserted. Set aside to cool for 10 minutes. Peel off the skins while the potatoes are still warm. Use a spoon to pass the potatoes through a ricer or push through a sieve using a spoon onto a work surface. Set aside to cool.

2 Add the flour and egg to the potato. Use your hands to gently bring everything together until you have a uniform dough – don't overwork it. Divide the dough into four. Roll each piece into a long sausage on a lightly floured surface to around 2cm in diameter. Cut each one into 1.5-2cm nuggets. You can keep them like this or roll ridges onto them with the back of a fork or a ridged pasta paddle. Set aside on a baking tray dusted with semolina.

3 To make the sauce, put the canned tomatoes in a small food processor or blender and blend until smooth. Heat the oil in a large, non-stick pan on low heat, add onions and cook, stirring occasionally for 10-15 minutes or until onion is soft and translucent. Add in the garlic and chilli and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the sugar, blitzed tomatoes and herbs. Increase heat to medium and bring to a simmer. Cook, uncovered, stirring often, for 20 minutes. Season with freshly ground black pepper.

4 Meanwhile, bring a large saucepan of water to the boil. Add the gnocchi in two batches and cook for 2-3 minutes or until they bob to the surface. Drain the gnocchi in a colander. Add the gnocchi to the tomato sauce and toss to coat. Spoon onto a large sharing plate, then top with the basil and parmesan.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1790kJ (428Cal),  
**protein** 15g, **total fat** 13g (sat. fat  
5g), **carbs** 60g, **fibre** 7g, **sodium**  
196mg • **Carb exchanges** 4  
• **GI estimate** high

### TWIST IT

**Add herbs** - You can add finely chopped herbs, wild garlic or even wilted, drained and blitzed spinach to your gnocchi dough for a green twist. Just mix into the potato along with the flour, egg and salt in step 1.

**Batch cook** - Make a double batch of the pomodoro sauce and gnocchi and freeze half for another time. The sauce works well in other dishes like eggplant parmigiana.

### COOK'S TIP

You can open-freeze the gnocchi on trays, then store in resealable freezer bags for up to 3 months. Cook from frozen for 3-5 minutes.

For a gluten-free option, replace the homemade gnocchi with gluten-free gnocchi and just make the pasta sauce part of the recipe.



GFO

## BIG BARBECUE CHICKEN KEBAB

**PREP** 40 MINS (+ MARINATING)

**COOK** 1 HOUR

**SERVES** 4 (AS A MAIN)

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken thigh fillets, trimmed of fat
- 4 Mission Soft & Fluffy Snack Wraps or gluten-free wraps, heated, to serve
- 1 red onion, halved, finely sliced
- 1 Roma tomato, halved and sliced

### MARINADE

- 200g reduced-fat Greek natural yoghurt
- 1 lemon, juiced, ½ lemon, zested
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, very finely grated or crushed
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp sweet paprika
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ½ tsp dried thyme
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch cayenne pepper

1 To make the marinade, put all the ingredients in a shallow glass or ceramic dish. Whisk until well combined. Open out each chicken thigh fillet, cover with a piece of non-stick baking paper and flatten it with your hand, then lift off the paper and cut the thigh in half. Add the chicken to the marinade and mix so it's completely coated. Cover, chill and marinate for at least 1 hour or overnight.

2 Thread all the chicken onto two long metal skewers so that both skewers go through each piece of meat, packing down tightly as you go to make a compact kebab.

3 Preheat a barbecue grill on medium-high. Add the chicken skewers. Cover the barbecue with a lid if it has one (or if not you can cover the kebabs with a metal dish). Cook for 45 minutes, turning every

15 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through. Transfer to a plate and cover loosely with foil. Set aside to rest for 5 minutes. Serve with bread, and top or serve with the sliced red onions and tomatoes, chips and tzatziki.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

#### PER SERVE (CHICKEN ONLY)

1280kJ (306Cal), **protein** 33g, **total fat** 14g (sat. fat 4g), **carbs** 10g, **fibre** 4g, **sodium** 158mg • **Carb exchanges** ½ • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free** • **Lower carb**  
**PER SERVE (AS A MEAL)** 2620kJ (627Cal), **protein** 42g, **total fat** 26g (sat. fat 6g), **carbs** 49g, **fibre** 11g, **sodium** 593mg • **Carb exchanges** 3 ½ • **GI estimate** medium • **Gluten-free option**

GF LC

### TZATZIKI

**PREP** 15 MINS

**SERVES** 4 (AS PART OF A MAIN)

- 1 cucumber, peeled, halved and deseeded
- 250g reduced-fat Greek yoghurt
- 1 small clove garlic, crushed or finely chopped
- 1½ tbsp white wine vinegar
- 2 tsp olive oil
- Small handful mint leaves or dill sprigs, finely chopped

1 Coarsely grate the cucumber along the length to create long strands, tip into a sieve set over the sink or a bowl. Set aside for 10 minutes to allow some of the moisture to drain.

2 Put the yoghurt, garlic, vinegar and oil in a bowl. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Toss to combine.

3 Use your hands to squeeze out any excess moisture. Add the cucumber to the yoghurt mixture with the mint.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 346kJ (83Cal), **protein** 5g, **total fat** 4g (sat. fat 1g), **carbs** 6g, **fibre** 2g, **sodium** 73mg • **Carb exchanges** ½ • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten free** • **Lower carb**

### COOK'S TIP

Can be made a day ahead and chilled – just give it a good stir before serving.

GF LCO

## THYME & OREGANO CHIPS

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 40 MINS

**SERVES** 4 (AS PART OF A MAIN)

- 250g frozen Strong Roots Crispy Skinny Fries (see Lower-Carb option opposite)
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- ½ tsp garlic granules
- Large pinch cayenne pepper (optional)

1 Preheat oven to 220°C (fan-forced). Place a large non-stick baking tray in the oven to preheat.

2 Put the frozen fries, oregano, thyme, garlic granules and cayenne pepper, if using, in a bowl. Toss until well combined.

3 Spread the fries over the preheated baking tray and cook for 15 minutes or until starting to turn golden. Use a spatula to turn them over and bake for a further 15-20 minutes or until golden and crisp – watch them for the last few minutes to ensure they don't burn.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 533kJ (128Cal), **protein** 1g, **total fat** 6g (sat. fat 0g), **carbs** 17g, **fibre** 2g, **sodium** 53mg • **Carb exchanges** 1 • **GI estimate** high • **Gluten free**



mediterranean

Big barbecue  
chicken kebab  
*Recipe, opposite*

### COOK'S TIP

**Cook it in the oven** - Preheat oven to 200°C (fan-forced). Sit the kebab across a roasting tin so it is suspended, or rest a wire rack over a roasting tin and place the chicken on top. Cook for 45-55 mins or until cooked through.

**Add onion** - Threading the chicken onto the two skewers at once can be a bit fiddly. To hold the skewers in place, you can start and finish with something more solid like half an onion or a thick slice of potato.

Thyme &  
oregano chips

### LOWER-CARB OPTION

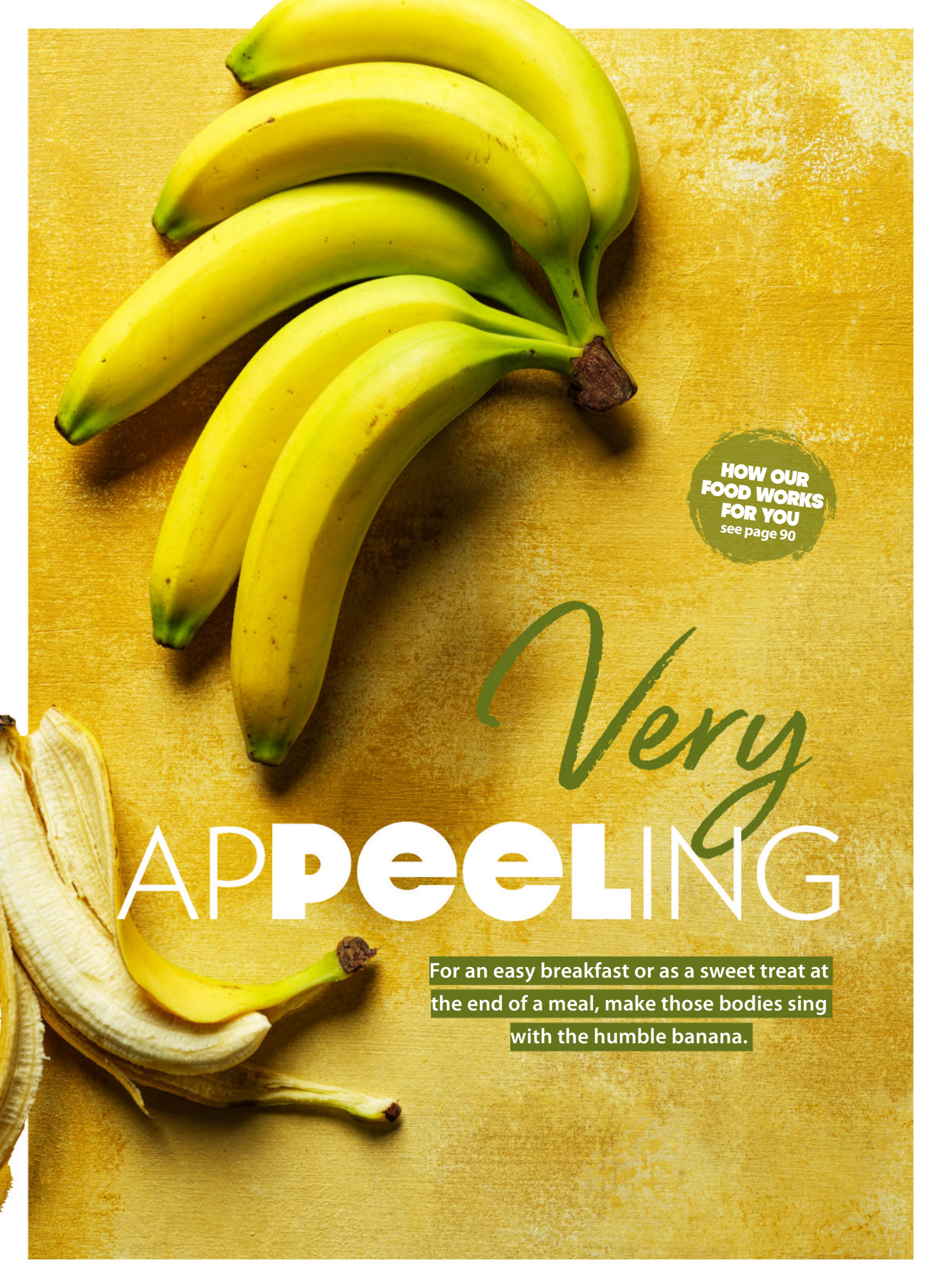
To make these chips even healthier, make your own. Simply cut 400g Zerella Spud Lite Potatoes, unpeeled, into thin sticks. Place in the bowl with step 1 with the other ingredients and spray with olive oil cooking spray. Toss to combine. Cook as per recipe.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 308kJ (74Cal),  
**protein** 1g, **total fat** 3g  
(sat. fat 0g), **carbs** 9g,  
**fibre** 2g, **sodium** 10mg  
• Carb exchanges ½ • GI  
estimate high • Gluten free  
• Lower carb

Tzatziki





**HOW OUR  
FOOD WORKS  
FOR YOU**  
see page 90

# Very APPEELING

For an easy breakfast or as a sweet treat at  
the end of a meal, make those bodies sing  
with the humble banana.



Boozy baked caramelised bananas Recipe, page 84





## BANANA & TAHINI PORRIDGE

**PREP** 5 MINS **COOK** 5 MINS  
**SERVES** 2 (AS A BREAKFAST)

1 tbsp tahini  
150ml skim milk, plus 1 tbsp, extra  
100g rolled oats  
2 cardamom pods, seeds removed, crushed  
2 small bananas, sliced  
1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds

1 Put the tahini, 1 tbsp milk and 1 tbsp water in a small bowl. Put the oats, cardamom, 1 sliced banana, 100ml milk and 300ml water in a saucepan. Cook over

medium heat, stirring, for 5 minutes or until creamy and hot.

2 Divide the oats between two bowls. Pour over the remaining milk, then top with the remaining sliced banana. Drizzle over the tahini mixture and sprinkle over the toasted sesame seeds.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1580kJ (378Cal), **protein** 13g, **total fat** 14g (sat. fat 2g), **carbs** 45g, **fibre** 8g, **sodium** 44mg • **Carb exchanges** 3 • **GI estimate** low



## BOOZY BAKED CARAMELISED BANANAS

**PREP** 10 MINS **COOK** 20 MINS  
**SERVES** 6 (AS AN OCCASIONAL DESSERT)

6 x 100g ripe bananas, peeled and sliced in half lengthways  
2 tbsp dark brown sugar  
2 tbsp sugar-free maple syrup  
3 tbsp rum or whisky  
40g pecans, toasted, chopped  
6 scoops Peters No Sugar Added Vanilla Ice Cream

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (fan-forced). Put the banana halves in an ovenproof dish. Add the sugar, maple syrup and rum. Toss to combine.

2 Bake the bananas for 15 minutes. Preheat grill on high.

3 Remove the bananas from the oven and place under the grill. Grill for 3-5 minutes or until bubbling and caramelised.

4 Spoon the bananas into bowls and scatter over the pecans. Serve with ice-cream, and any of the caramelised syrup from the dish drizzled over the top.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 870kJ (208Cal), **protein** 3g, **total fat** 6g (sat. fat 1g), **carbs** 26g, **fibre** 4g, **sodium** 16mg • **Carb exchanges** 1½ • **GI estimate** low





## BANANA OAT PANCAKES

**PREP** 5 MINS **COOK** 15 MINS  
**SERVES** 2 (AS A BREAKFAST)

125ml (½ cup) oat milk  
2 x 60g eggs, separated  
1 small banana  
90g (1 cup) rolled oats  
2 tsp baking powder  
¼ tsp vanilla extract  
130g (½ cup) low-fat vanilla  
yoghurt, to serve  
4 large strawberries, sliced,  
to serve  
¼ cup blueberries, to serve

**1** Put the milk, egg yolks, banana, oats, baking powder and vanilla in a small blender. Process until smooth.

**2** Use electric beaters to whisk the egg whites until stiff peaks. Whisk 1-2 tbsp of the whites into the batter. Use a large metal spoon to fold in the remaining egg whites.

**2** Spray a medium non-stick frying pan with cooking spray. Heat over medium heat. Pour about 2 tbsp of batter into the pan and cook for 1-2 minutes or until the base sets and bubbles appear all over the top. Flip and cook the other side for a minute. Repeat in batches, making sure the top looks dryish before attempting to flip or the centre will collapse.

**3** Divide the pancakes between serving plates. Top with the yoghurt and berries. Serve.

### NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 1500kJ (359Cal),  
**protein** 18g, **total fat** 11g (sat.  
fat 2g), **carbs** 42g, **fibre** 8g,  
**sodium** 476mg • **Carb**  
**exchanges** 3 • **GI estimate** low

bananas





# COOK, eAT, eNJOY

Discover our supermarket favourites, learn kitchen hints,  
try some quick and easy recipes, all from food editor *Alison Roberts*

We're often told about the benefits of eating an avocado – they have twice as much potassium as a banana, are rich in vitamins B and E, and although high in fat, it's monounsaturated fat. This type of fat is linked to increased 'good' HDL cholesterol and may help reduce levels of harmful LDL cholesterol in the blood. The only problem is that often an avocado is too firm to eat, but then it's suddenly gone too far and is overripe. So, don't save them for the weekend, even if they do feel like a luxury – keep an eye on them and use in everyday meals, so you can catch them when they're perfectly ripe.

## QUICK IDEAS

**IN SALADS** with black beans, tomatoes, red onion, lime and fresh coriander for a substantial side salad.

**MASHED ON TOAST** for breakfast, scattered with freshly ground black pepper and chilli flakes, or topped with a poached egg.

**HALVED AND TOPPED** with a favourite dressing as a snack.

**MADE INTO A SMOOTHIE:** Blitz 1 small avocado with 2 handfuls of spinach, 50g piece pineapple, 10cm piece cucumber and 300ml coconut water. Serves 1.

# AVO-NOTHER avocado





## SUPERMARKET CRUSH

### Vetta SMART Protein Flour

Double the protein with 25 per cent less carbs! Vetta SMART Protein Flour delivers twice the protein, twice the fibre and 25 per cent less carbs than regular flour, making it the flour of choice for baking enthusiasts looking to protein-boost their favourite baked goods. Plus, Vetta SMART Protein Flour boasts a 5-star health rating. No wonder

Vetta Flour is a SMART choice for a healthier you!

**Vetta SMART Protein Flour is available in Plain Flour 1kg from selected Woolworths stores around the country. RRP \$4.50**



## SECOND DESSERT

Top 1 thin slice (30g) toasted brioche bread with 2 tbsp smooth ricotta, a few sliced strawberries and 2 tsp finely chopped roasted hazelnuts and a sprinkle of ground cinnamon. **Serves 1.**

**PER SERVE** 730kJ (175Cal), **protein** 9g, **total fat** 7g (sat. fat 3g), **carbs** 17g, **fibre** 2g, **sodium** 229mg • **Carb exchanges** 1 • **GI estimate** high

# QUICK EVERYDAY LUNCHES

GFO

## QUICK VEGIE & BEAN SOUP

Cook 250g finely chopped mixed vegetables (like carrot, broccoli stalks and florets, zucchini) in a little olive oil and garlic until very soft. Add 250ml (1 cup) water and 1 x 125g can rinsed and drained chickpeas. Simmer for a few minutes. Stir in a small handful of chopped flat-leaf parsley and season with freshly ground black pepper. Serve with a 40g slice of wholemeal sourdough bread or gluten-free bread.

**PER SERVE** 1110kJ (266Cal), **protein** 13g, **total fat** 7g (sat. fat 1g), **carbs** 30g, **fibre** 12g, **sodium** 412mg • **Carb exchanges** 2 • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten-free option**

LC

## EGG WRAP WITH SALAD

Beat 2 eggs with 2 tbsp rolled oats and a little chopped parsley or coriander. Heat a little olive oil in a 21cm non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add the egg mixture and swirl around the pan. Cook for 1 minute 30 seconds until almost set, flip over and cook for 30-60 seconds. Fill with a handful of salad leaves, little chopped tomato, 2 chopped kalamata olives and 50g shredded skinless chicken breast fillet. Roll up and serve. **Serves 1.**

**PER SERVE** 1290kJ (309Cal), **protein** 32g, **total fat** 16g (sat. fat 4g), **carbs** 9g, **fibre** 2g, **sodium** 373mg • **Carb exchanges** ½ • **GI estimate** low • **Lower carb**

GF

LC

## ASPARAGUS & TUNA SALAD

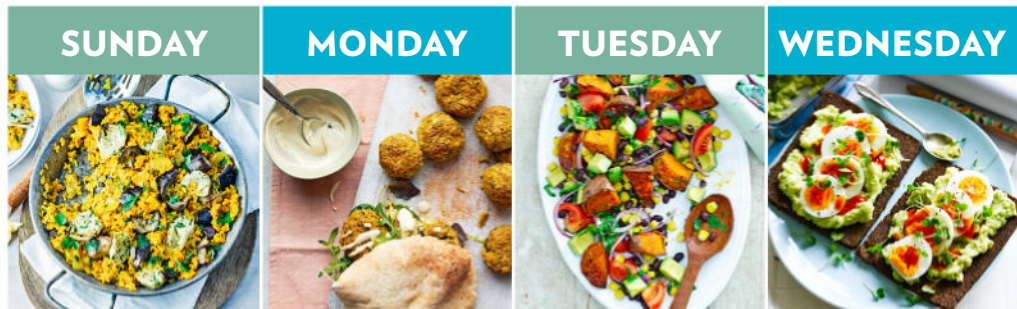
Chargrill ½ bunch asparagus and cut into 4cm lengths. Toss with a handful of baby spinach leaves, 1 boiled and quartered egg, ¼ ripe sliced avocado and 6 halved cherry tomatoes. Toss in 1 x 95g can drained tuna in spring water and drizzle with a little 97% fat-free creamy dressing. **Serves 1.**

**PER SERVE** 1030kJ (246Cal), **protein** 26g, **total fat** 12g (sat. fat 3g), **carbs** 6g, **fibre** 6g, **sodium** 325mg • **Carb exchanges** ½ • **GI estimate** low • **Gluten free** • **Lower carb**



# Plan your week,

Wondering what to eat this week? Try these delicious daily plans



|                  |                                                                                        |                                                                  |                                                                   |                                                    |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| H <sub>2</sub> O | Start each day with a glass of water. You should have 6-10 glasses a day,              |                                                                  |                                                                   |                                                    |
| Breakfast        | 1 slice rye sourdough toasted, topped with 1 x 130g can baked beans, warmed            | Banana & tahini porridge (p 84)                                  | 2 Weetbix served with 185ml (¾ cup) skim milk & ½ cup blueberries | Fruit & cheese breakfast bowl (p 52)               |
| Optional snack   | 1 piece seasonal fresh fruit                                                           | 2 Vita-Weats topped with 20g reduced-fat cheddar & sliced tomato | 170g tub YoPRO yoghurt                                            | 170g tub YoPRO yoghurt                             |
| Lunch            | Artichoke & eggplant rice (p 40) <i>pictured</i>                                       | Egg & salad wrap (p 87)                                          | Sweet potato Tex Mex salad (p 29) <i>pictured</i>                 | Egg & avocado open sandwich (p 62) <i>pictured</i> |
| Optional snack   | 170g tub YoPRO yoghurt                                                                 | 30g unsalted nuts                                                | 1 apple sliced, served with 30g reduced-fat cheddar               | 1 cup carrot sticks & 2 tbsp tzatziki              |
| Dinner           | Healthy chicken pasta bake (p 48)                                                      | Broccoli falafel pitas (p 16) <i>pictured</i>                    | Ratatouille lasagne (p 18)                                        | Salmon & pumpkin soup (p 16)                       |
| Alcohol          | If you choose to drink, stick to 1-2 standard drinks per day. It's also a good idea to |                                                                  |                                                                   |                                                    |
| Optional dessert | 60 second dessert (p 87)                                                               | 1 cup fresh fruit salad                                          | 2 fresh dates                                                     | 1 cup fresh fruit salad                            |
| Exercise         | Aim for 20-60 minutes of moderate exercise each day.                                   |                                                                  |                                                                   |                                                    |



# it's easy!

| THURSDAY                                                                          | FRIDAY                                                                            | SATURDAY                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |
| depending on your exercise levels.                                                |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |
| 1 slice rye sourdough toasted, topped with 2 poached eggs & handful of rocket     | 1 cup fresh fruit salad topped with 170g tub Chobani Fit yoghurt                  | Banana oat pancakes (p 83) <i>pictured</i>                                        |
| 30g unsalted nuts                                                                 | Cottage cheese biscuit (p 54)                                                     | 1 piece seasonal fresh fruit                                                      |
| Asparagus & tuna salad (p 87)                                                     | Quick vegie & bean soup (p 87)                                                    | Miso roasted tofu with sweet potato (p 27)                                        |
| 1 piece seasonal fresh fruit                                                      | 2 Vita-Weats topped with 20g reduced-fat cheddar & sliced tomato                  | 1 cup carrot sticks & 2 tbsp hummus                                               |
| Chicken with sweet & sour leeks (p 18) <i>pictured</i>                            | Spiced prawns with parmesan polenta (p 20) <i>pictured</i>                        | Mac 'n' cheese lasagne (p 47)                                                     |
| have a couple of alcohol-free days a week.                                        |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |
| ½ cup warm berries topped with ½ cup low-fat custard                              | 87g tub Skinny Cow ice-cream sundae                                               | 4 canned apricot halves with ½ cup diet vanilla yoghurt                           |
| Always discuss your exercise plans with your doctor first.                        |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |



## VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY AND YOUR DIABETES MANAGEMENT?

Vitamin D deficiency is becoming increasingly prevalent in Australia. It is well known that vitamin D is important for bone health, immune function and mental wellbeing. But emerging research suggests it may also have a big impact on blood glucose level (BGL) management.

Some studies have linked healthy vitamin D levels with improved insulin sensitivity. This means your body may be better able to use insulin effectively, which is crucial for keeping BGLs in check. There's also early research linking healthy vitamin D levels to a lower risk of developing diabetes and fewer complications if you already have it.

While more research is needed, looking after your vitamin D is an easy step toward better health.

### WHERE TO GET VITAMIN D

**SUNLIGHT** – A few minutes most days can help

**EGGS** – Especially the yolks

**SALMON** – Rich in vitamin D and heart-healthy fats

**SUN-EXPOSED**

**MUSHROOMS** – Leave them in sunlight for 20–30 minutes

**FORTIFIED FOODS** – Check labels on milk and margarine

If you're unsure about your levels, ask your healthcare team about testing or supplements. A simple boost in vitamin D could help support your diabetes management and overall wellbeing.



# Our food explained

Every recipe in *Diabetic Living* is carefully created to help you enjoy a healthy, balanced diet

Our Nutritional info boxes sit alongside each recipe. Use them to track your nutritional requirements, as well as count carbs, carb exchanges and find out whether a recipe is low-, medium- or high-GI, or gluten-free. Easy!

## Serves 2 (as a main)

We show you whether a food is designed to be a between-meals snack, breakfast, lunch (a lighter main) or dinner (the main meal of the day). When we say, "as an occasional dish", it should only be eaten as a treat, such as once a fortnight.

## Brand names

We often use product names to make it easier to find nutritionally suitable brands when shopping.

## Sugar or sugar substitute

In some dishes, you can use either sugar or a sugar substitute. In these cases, we give you the nutrition analysis for both.

## Granulated sugar substitute

Most sugar substitutes on the market measure spoon for spoon, rather than weight. For example, if the recipe uses 220g (1 cup) of sugar, you would replace this with 1 cup of granulated sugar substitute.

Summer vegetable & flatbread platter with dill & mustard dip

Recipe, page 66

## NUTRITIONAL INFO

**PER SERVE** 750kJ (179Cal), protein 8g, total fat 2g (sat. fat 1g), carbs 29g, fibre 7g, sodium 438mg • Carb exchanges 2 • GI estimate medium • Gluten-free option

## Optional ingredients

Whenever we list an ingredient as optional, it isn't included in the nutrition analysis and it's up to you if you want to use it.

## Choice of ingredients

When we give you the choice of two different ingredients, we analyse only the first one.

## Carb exchanges

Using exchanges makes counting carbs easier: one exchange = 15g of carbs. Aim for 1-2 exchanges in every snack and 1-4 exchanges in each meal.

## Lower-carb option

When possible we will provide an ingredient substitution from the main recipe to reduce the carbs to less than 2 carb exchanges for a main or light meal and less than 1 carb exchange for a snack or dessert. Nutrition information for this variation will be included, but please note the finished product will vary slightly from what is presented in the recipe picture. ■



CUT OUT & KEEP

## YOUR DAILY ALLOWANCE GUIDE

With this guide, you can create the perfect eating plan for your needs

### To maintain your weight\*

Kilojoules 8700kJ  
Protein 80g  
Total fat 70g  
Saturated fat 24g  
Carbs 270g  
Fibre 30g  
Sodium Less than 2000mg

### To lose weight\*

Kilojoules 6000kJ  
Protein 65g  
Total fat 45g  
Saturated fat 15g  
Carbs 180g  
Fibre 30g  
Sodium Less than 2000mg



# living

MOTIVATION ♦ EXPERT ADVICE ♦ INSPIRATION

# well

*“When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better, too.”*

*Paulo Coelho*

PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES



Diabetes-related neuropathy is a common complication affecting people with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, particularly if they have lived with the condition for many years. DL Magazine diabetes educator, Dr Kate Marsh explains what diabetes-related neuropathy is, who is at risk, how it is managed, and importantly, what you can do to reduce your risk.

## WHAT IS NEUROPATHY?

Diabetes-related neuropathy is nerve damage caused by diabetes. Over time, high glucose levels can damage the structure and function of the nerves.

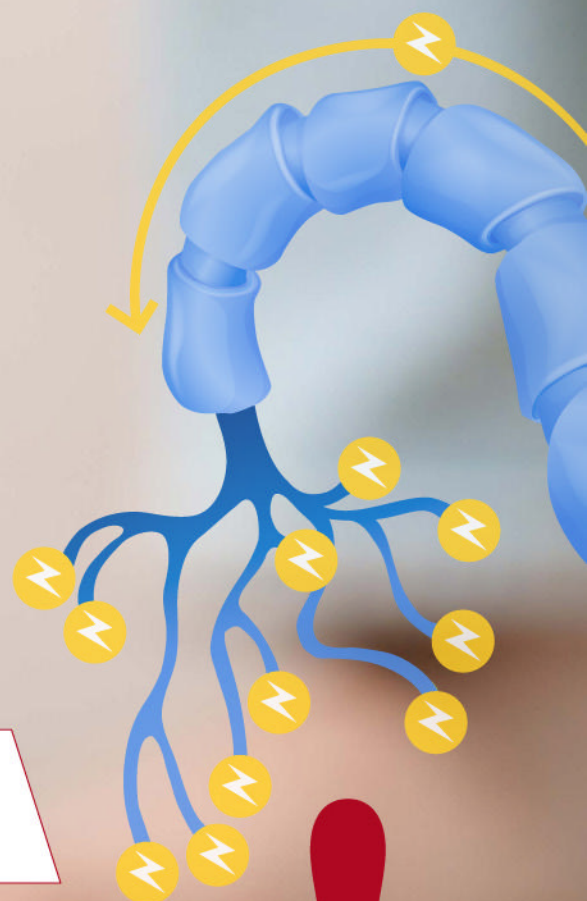
There are two main types of diabetes-related neuropathy:

**PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY**, which causes pain or loss of feeling in the toes, feet and legs, but can also affect the hands and arms. This is the most common form of diabetes-related neuropathy.

**AUTONOMIC NEUROPATHY** which affects the nerves that control the heart and blood vessels, digestive system, urinary tract, sex organs, sweat glands and eyes.

There are also some less common forms of neuropathy, including proximal and focal neuropathies.

# WHAT A nerve!







## Look after your feet

Good foot care is important for everyone with diabetes, but particularly if you have peripheral neuropathy. As you lose your ability to sense pain, heat and cold, your risk of injuring your feet increases. Have a daily self-care routine for your feet and see a podiatrist at least every 3-6 months. It is also essential to seek medical advice early if you notice any problems with your feet, to avoid the problem getting worse.

Even minor foot infections or injuries can become a problem when you have diabetes, so it's best to seek help early.



## WHAT CAUSES DIABETES-RELATED NEUROPATHY?

The main cause of diabetes-related neuropathy is high blood glucose levels. Excess glucose in the blood can damage the nerves in your body, particularly if blood glucose levels remain high for long periods of time. This means that keeping your blood glucose levels in your target range as much as possible is important for reducing risk. For example, in the well-known Diabetes Control and Complications Trial (DCCT), intensive blood glucose management reduced the risk of developing nerve damage by 60 per cent in individuals with type 1 diabetes. In people with type 2 diabetes, studies have shown that improved blood glucose management can reduce the progression of neuropathy.

However, blood glucose levels aren't the only factor affecting risk.

### Other risk factors include:

**Genetics** – some people appear to be more susceptible to nerve damage than others

**Age** – the risk increases with age

**Duration of diabetes** – your risk is higher the longer you have had diabetes

**Excess alcohol**

**Smoking**

**Having high levels of blood fats** (cholesterol and triglycerides)

**Having raised blood pressure**

**Carrying excess weight**

Some people never develop neuropathy, while others can develop it soon after diagnosis of diabetes. Since many people with type 2 diabetes have had high blood glucose levels for several years before diagnosis, they may already have nerve damage when they are diagnosed with diabetes.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF NEUROPATHY?

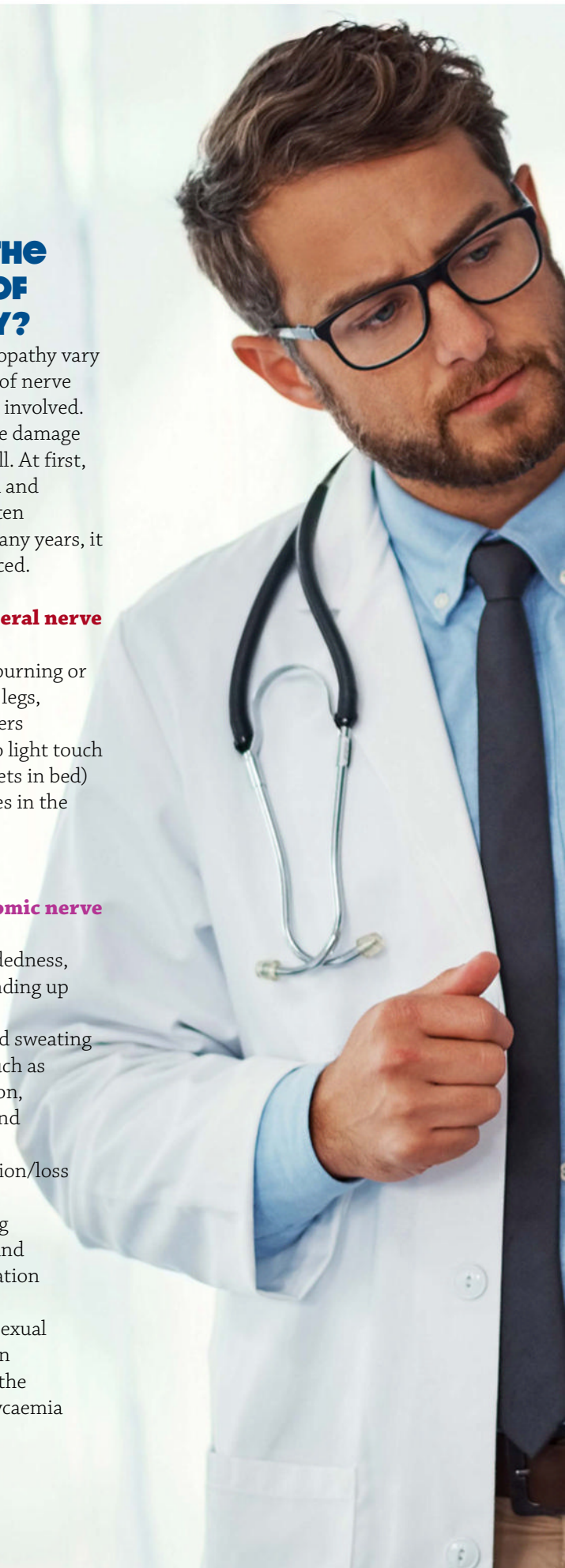
The symptoms of neuropathy vary depending on the type of nerve damage and the nerves involved. Some people with nerve damage have no symptoms at all. At first, symptoms may be mild and because the damage often develops slowly over many years, it may initially go unnoticed.

### Symptoms of peripheral nerve damage include:

- numbness, tingling, burning or pain in the toes, feet, legs, hands, arms and fingers
- extreme sensitivity to light touch (for example, the sheets in bed)
- wasting of the muscles in the feet or hands
- muscle weakness

### Symptoms of autonomic nerve damage include:

- dizziness or lightheadedness, particularly after standing up
- changes in vision
- increased or decreased sweating
- digestive problems such as diarrhoea, constipation, indigestion, nausea and vomiting
- problems with urination/loss of bladder control
- difficulties swallowing
- erectile dysfunction and problems with ejaculation in men
- vaginal dryness and sexual dysfunction in women
- difficulties detecting the symptoms of hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose)





## HOW IS NEUROPATHY DIAGNOSED?

There is no simple test for diagnosing diabetes-related neuropathy. However, it is important that you have regular screening, as early diagnosis and proper management can prevent or slow the progression.

In their 2025 Standards of Care in Diabetes, the American Diabetes Association recommends that everyone with diabetes has an assessment for diabetes-related peripheral neuropathy and autonomic neuropathy starting at diagnosis of type 2 diabetes and five years after the diagnosis of type 1 diabetes and at least annually thereafter.

Assessment for peripheral neuropathy involves checking the sensation in your feet. This should include a monofilament test, checking temperature or pinprick sensation and vibration sensation. These tests are important as you may not always have symptoms. If not recognised and addressed, this can increase the risk of foot injuries, ulcers and amputations.

To screen for autonomic neuropathy, your doctor may ask questions about signs and symptoms including feeling faint or dizzy when you stand up, digestive symptoms such as constipation, diarrhoea or feeling full soon after meals, erectile dysfunction, urinary incontinence, changes in sweating or dry cracked skin on your feet and hands. If you have any of these symptoms, your doctor may then refer you for further testing.

*Early diagnosis and proper management can prevent or slow the progression of diabetes-related neuropathy.*



## complications

# WHAT CAN I DO IF I HAVE NEUROPATHY?

While you can't repair damaged nerves, there are things you can do to slow the progression, lessen the symptoms and reduce the risk of complications.

Keep your blood glucose levels within the target range recommended by your doctor or diabetes team.

If you have

nerve damage in your feet, good foot care is essential (see p93).

Pain caused by nerve damage can be treated with medications.

Medications that have been found to be helpful include anti-seizure medications such as gabapentin, antidepressants such as amitriptyline and duloxetine and sodium channel blockers. Topical creams or patches

containing capsaicin, can also help.

If you have digestive problems, a dietitian can help. They may recommend dietary changes such as having small regular meals and reducing fat and fibre intake to reduce or manage your symptoms. If you are taking any medications

that worsen stomach emptying, your doctor may consider stopping these, if possible. If you have severe gastroparesis, medications may be prescribed although they can have other side effects, so are only recommended for short-term use.

Low blood pressure can be treated with medications, compression stockings and having enough salt and fluids.

If you have sexual problems, medicines or devices to improve erections are available for men, and women with vaginal dryness may find lubricating creams helpful.

Physical therapy and occupational therapy may help improve your balance, strength and function.

Psychological support can help you with dealing with the mental health aspects of living with diabetes-related complications. There is some evidence for benefits of cognitive-behavioural therapy and mindfulness, but more studies are needed.

## THE BEST TREATMENT IS PREVENTION

There are several things you can do to reduce your risk of nerve damage:

- Keep your blood glucose levels within the target range recommended by your doctor or diabetes team.
- If you drink alcohol, limit your intake. This means keeping to one to two standard drinks per day with at least two alcohol-free days each week
- Exercise regularly
- Don't smoke
- Maintain a healthy weight for your height
- Keep blood fats and blood pressure in the recommended ranges
- It is also important to see your doctor if you have any signs of symptoms of neuropathy and to have regular screening

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# THE PERIMENOPAUSE PLAN

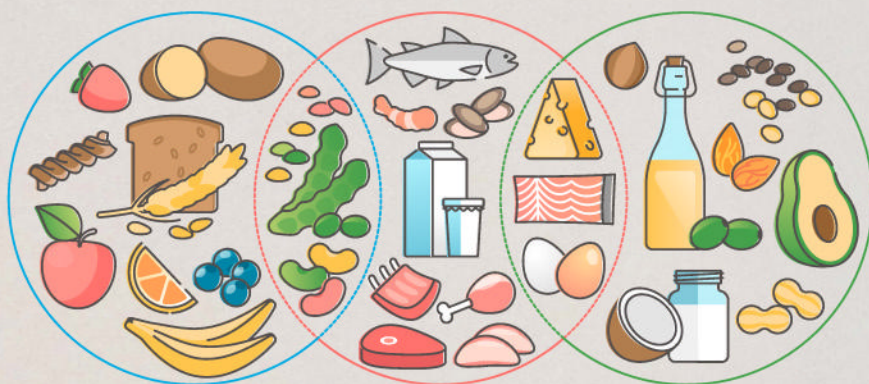
Understanding your symptoms and setting realistic health goals are the first steps to managing perimenopause. In Faye James' new book, she provides women with tools to navigate this transformative phase of life



# ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS FOR THE **PERIMENOPAUSAL BODY**

Managing perimenopause means taking extra care with your diet. Each nutrient you consume has a unique impact on your physical and mental health, especially as hormonal changes affect everything from energy levels and mood to bone health and metabolism. By focusing on a balanced diet that meets the unique needs of perimenopause, you can greatly reduce common symptoms and boost your sense of well-being. Here, I'll guide you through the essential macronutrients, vitamins, and minerals that can help you feel more balanced, energised, and prepared for the journey ahead.

## BALANCING MACRONUTRIENTS

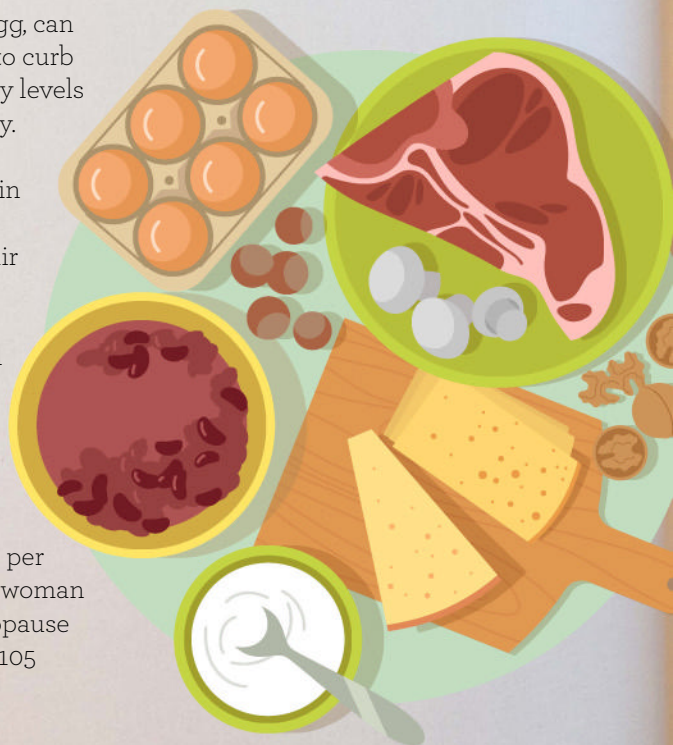


Macronutrients – proteins, fats, and carbohydrates – are foundational for a balanced diet that supports physical health, mental clarity, and stable energy. Each macronutrient plays a vital role in managing perimenopausal symptoms, making it crucial to understand how to incorporate them in ways that best support you.

### PROTEINS:

Protein is essential for building and maintaining muscle mass, which becomes increasingly important as estrogen levels drop. Estrogen helps preserve lean muscle and supports a healthy metabolism, so when levels decrease, muscle mass can diminish, making it harder to keep weight stable. By eating lean proteins – such as chicken, fish, tofu, eggs, and legumes – you can help stabilise blood sugar, reduce cravings, and maintain lean muscle. Protein is also highly satiating, meaning it can help you feel full for longer periods and prevent energy dips between meals. For perimenopausal women, aiming for 60 grams of protein per day can provide benefits for muscle maintenance

and blood sugar stability. Adding protein-rich snacks, like a handful of almonds or a boiled egg, can also be an effective way to curb cravings and keep energy levels stable throughout the day. If you're incorporating strength exercises, protein becomes even more essential, as it helps repair muscle and supports recovery. Protein requirements vary based on factors like age, activity level, and health goals, but a good general guideline is 1–1.5 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight per day. For instance, a 70kg woman going through perimenopause would need between 70–105 grams of protein daily.







### HEALTHY FATS:

Fat is often misunderstood, but healthy fats are crucial for brain health, hormone production, and reducing inflammation in the body. Fatty acids, especially omega-3s found in foods like salmon, chia seeds, flaxseeds, and walnuts, are known to support cognitive function and may even alleviate symptoms like mood swings and anxiety. Omega-3s have anti-inflammatory properties that help reduce the body's stress response, which can be particularly helpful for managing perimenopausal symptoms. Healthy fats also promote the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins like vitamins A, D, E, and K, which are essential for skin, bone, and immune health. Incorporating avocados, olive oil, nuts, and seeds into your meals is a great way to ensure you're getting these benefits. I recommend aiming for a small portion of healthy fats with each meal – whether it's a sprinkle of seeds on your salad, a spoonful of olive oil on roasted vegetables, or a slice of avocado with breakfast. Not only will it help you feel more satisfied, but it also provides crucial nutrients to support your overall well-being.

### COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES:

Carbohydrates are an important part of any diet, but the type of carbs you choose can make a big difference in how you feel. Complex carbohydrates – found in whole grains like oats, quinoa, brown rice, and starchy vegetables like sweet potatoes – provide a slow, steady release of energy and are high in fibre. Fibre is especially important during perimenopause because it helps stabilise blood sugar levels, supports digestion, and promotes a feeling of fullness. Unlike simple carbohydrates, which can cause quick spikes in blood sugar followed by crashes, complex carbohydrates provide sustained energy, reducing the likelihood of cravings and mood swings. Whole grains also contain B vitamins, which are essential for energy production and cognitive health. Aiming for a balance of complex carbohydrates in your diet can prevent the energy crashes often experienced during perimenopause, allowing you to feel steady and focused throughout the day. When building your meals, aim for a balanced plate: include a lean protein, a healthy fat, and a portion of complex carbohydrates, along with a generous serving of vegetables. This combination of macronutrients will keep you satiated, energised, and mentally sharp. Creating meals with this balance also helps manage symptoms like fatigue, cravings, and irritability, making it easier to feel your best each day.





# VITAL VITAMINS AND MINERALS

While macronutrients form the structure of a balanced diet, vitamins and minerals are the powerhouses that support various bodily functions, from bone health and muscle maintenance to mood regulation. During perimenopause, certain vitamins and minerals become particularly important for symptom management and overall health.

## CALCIUM AND VITAMIN D:

One of estrogen's roles is to aid calcium absorption, so as estrogen levels drop, the risk of bone density loss increases.

This makes calcium and vitamin D essential for maintaining strong bones. Calcium-rich foods like leafy green vegetables, dairy products, almonds, and fortified plant-based milk can support bone health. However, without adequate vitamin D, calcium can't be absorbed properly. Since vitamin D is primarily obtained through sunlight exposure, many people find it beneficial to include vitamin D-rich foods, like fatty fish, eggs, and fortified products. If sunlight exposure is limited, a vitamin D supplement may be helpful. Together, calcium and vitamin D help you protect bone density, allowing you to stay active, reduce the risk of fractures, and maintain a strong, healthy body as you age.



## MAGNESIUM:

Magnesium is often called the "relaxation mineral" because of its ability to reduce anxiety, improve sleep quality, and support muscle relaxation. During perimenopause, magnesium's role becomes even more significant, as it helps manage stress and improves sleep, which are common challenges during this phase. Foods like spinach, pumpkin seeds, almonds, and whole grains are excellent sources of magnesium and can be easily incorporated into your meals. Magnesium also supports heart health and muscle function, making it a valuable addition to any diet. If you struggle with restless sleep or frequent muscle cramps, you may find that magnesium-rich foods or a magnesium supplement can make a noticeable difference in how you feel.

## B VITAMINS:

B vitamins, including B6, B12, and folate, play a crucial role in energy production, brain health, and mood stabilisation. Found in foods like eggs, leafy greens, whole grains, and lean meats, these vitamins are especially important during perimenopause, as they help combat fatigue and "brain fog." B vitamins support the nervous system, making them particularly helpful in managing symptoms of anxiety or irritability. If you're feeling mentally or physically drained, adding B vitamin-rich foods to your meals can provide a much-needed boost, helping you maintain energy and focus throughout the day. For some women, a B-complex supplement may be beneficial, but always consult with your healthcare provider before adding new supplements.



Adding these key vitamins and minerals to your diet can be transformative for your perimenopausal journey. By prioritising nutrient-dense foods, you're not only addressing immediate symptoms but also setting up a foundation for long-term health and vitality.



# MANAGING SUGAR AND CAFFEINE

Sugar and caffeine are often quick fixes for low energy or cravings, but they can have a significant impact on perimenopausal symptoms. While occasional indulgences are normal, keeping an eye on your sugar and caffeine intake can help you feel more balanced, energised, and calm.

## MANAGING CAFFEINE:

Many of us turn to caffeine for a quick energy boost, but too much caffeine can worsen symptoms of perimenopause, such as anxiety, irritability, and disrupted sleep. High caffeine intake, especially in the afternoon, can interfere with sleep quality, leading to a cycle of fatigue and stress. If you're sensitive to caffeine, consider gradually reducing your intake or switching to herbal teas or green tea, which offer a gentler lift without the post-caffeine crash. Green tea, for instance, contains a compound called L-theanine, which promotes calmness while providing an energy boost, making it a suitable alternative during perimenopause.

Managing sugar and caffeine doesn't mean you need to eliminate them entirely, but reducing their presence in your daily routine can lead to more consistent energy levels and improved mood. Small adjustments in these areas can make a noticeable difference in how you feel, helping you to stay energised and steady throughout the day.

## REDUCING SUGAR:

Excess sugar can lead to blood sugar spikes and crashes, causing sudden shifts in energy and mood. This roller-coaster effect can make symptoms like fatigue and irritability worse, and it may even contribute to weight gain, particularly around the abdomen. Reducing added sugars in your diet – such as those in sweets, soft drinks, and processed foods – can prevent these energy crashes and keep your mood stable. Opt for natural sugars found in fruits, which come paired with fibre to

slow down the release of sugar into your bloodstream. By focusing on whole foods, you not only lower your sugar intake but also boost your intake of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that support overall health.



*The Perimenopause Plan* by Faye James,  
New Holland  
Publishers, RRP \$29.99





# RECLAIMING

How to cope with diabetes without losing yourself

# joy!

**L**iving with type 2 diabetes can feel like a full-time job. Between checking blood glucose, planning meals, counting carbs, taking medications and navigating doctor's appointments, it's easy to lose track of the one thing that once felt natural: joy.

For many people, diabetes doesn't just impact the body – it reshapes daily life, routines, relationships and even identity. Spontaneous dinners become stressful decisions. Comfort foods come with guilt. Activities that used to be fun can start to feel like risks. Over time, a person can begin to feel less like themselves and more like “a diabetic”.

But here's the truth: *you* are still *you*. Diabetes may be a part of your life, but it is not your entire story. You are allowed to feel joy, pleasure and pride. You are allowed to laugh, enjoy food, move your body for fun and live with purpose. Coping with diabetes doesn't mean sacrificing your identity – it means finding new ways to nurture it.

Here's how to reconnect with yourself and reclaim joy while living with diabetes.

## THE EMOTIONAL WEIGHT OF A DIAGNOSIS

A diabetes diagnosis often brings a flood of emotions: fear, shame, grief, confusion. Many people feel they've somehow “failed” or blame themselves, even though type 2 diabetes is driven by a complex mix of genetics, environment, lifestyle and systemic factors.

Then comes the mental load: food labels, medication schedules, constant monitoring. Add to that the external pressures – unhelpful comments from others, diet culture, social stigma – and it's no wonder many people feel emotionally drained or overwhelmed.

One of the most subtle but significant losses people report is the loss of spontaneity. *Want to grab ice-cream with your kids on a summer day?* Suddenly you're doing mental maths about carbs. *Want to go on a weekend trip?* You're packing

medications, snacks, testing supplies. The spontaneity that once brought delight can now spark anxiety.

Over time, this can shift a person's sense of self. Where you once saw yourself as an adventurous eater, a carefree traveller or a laid-back parent, you may now feel like the “health-conscious one,” the “person who has to plan,” the “one who can't eat that.”

That sense of identity loss is real – but it's not irreversible.

## REDISCOVERING THE THINGS THAT LIGHT YOU UP

Diabetes can take up a lot of space, especially early on. But you are more than a person with a condition – you are still a whole, complex, creative, funny, passionate human being.

What are the things you used to do that made you feel alive? Was it painting, playing music, gardening, volunteering, dancing, baking, bushwalking with friends?

If diabetes has pulled you away



**LETTING GO OF  
PERFECTION AND  
FOOD GUILT**

One of the biggest barriers to joy for people with diabetes is the constant internal pressure to “eat perfectly.” You may feel guilty for having dessert or shame for skipping a workout. But this all-or-nothing thinking is not only unrealistic – it’s damaging.

Food is more than fuel. It’s connection, tradition, culture and comfort. You do not have to deprive yourself to be healthy. You do not have to eliminate joy from your plate. What matters most is consistent habits – making choices most of the time that support your health, while still allowing room for enjoyment.

Yes, managing diabetes requires mindfulness. But it does not require misery.

Try reframing how you think about food:

- » Instead of “I can’t have that,” try “How can I make this meal work for me?”
- » Instead of “I ruined everything,” try “This was one choice; I’ll make another one next time.”
- » Instead of viewing food as a threat, see it as a tool – a way to nourish and energise your body, not punish it.

**Guilt and shame don’t  
belong on your plate.  
Pleasure and peace do.**





from those things, it's time to reconnect – even in small ways.

- » If you love food and cooking, explore diabetes-friendly recipes that still celebrate flavour and joy
- » If you love being active, find movement that feels good – not punishing – like walking in nature, dancing in your living room, or stretching to music you love
- » If you love helping others, look for diabetes support groups or advocacy opportunities where your voice can make a difference

Even 10 minutes a day spent doing something just for joy – not for numbers, not for outcomes – can be a powerful reminder that you are still you.

### PROTECTING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Managing a chronic condition like diabetes takes mental strength – and sometimes, that strength comes from knowing when to ask for help.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, anxious, hopeless, or burned out, you're not alone. Diabetes distress and depression are common, and they are treatable. Talking to a therapist, diabetes educator, or support group can help you process the emotional load and develop tools to manage it.

There is no weakness in seeking support. In fact, it's one of the strongest things you can do.

### CREATING A JOY-FIRST MINDSET

Here's a radical idea: Joy can be part of your diabetes care plan.

It might not show up on a glucose meter, but joy reduces stress, improves motivation, boosts immune function, and helps you stay engaged in self-care. It's not a luxury – it's a necessity.

That means making space for things that make you smile, laugh, relax and feel grounded. That might be:

- » Listening to music while you cook
  - » Taking a walk with a friend
  - » Watching a funny show
  - » Lighting a candle and reading before bed
  - » Playing with your pet or kids without tracking time
- Joy doesn't have to be big. It just has to be yours.

### THE GOOD NEWS: YOU ARE STILL WHOLE

Living with diabetes will change certain things – but it doesn't have to take away your joy, your identity or your dreams.

Yes, you may have to plan more. Yes, you may have to make different choices. But inside you is still the same vibrant, hopeful, curious, joyful person you've always been.

Coping with diabetes is not just about blood glucose levels – it's about self-compassion, reclaiming your life and remembering that your value was never tied to perfection. You deserve a life filled with laughter, flavour, connection and light.

**You are not your A1C.  
You are not your  
diagnosis. You are still  
you – and joy still  
belongs to you.**



You like to move it, move it... how staying physically fit also benefits your grey matter

# BRAIN TRAINING

**R**esearchers from the University of South Australia and US-based AdventHealth Research Institute have found that staying active through moderate-to-vigorous physical activity is linked to improved brain health in older adults. The benefits include significantly better processing speed (how fast you can think), working memory (your ability to store information for short periods of time) and executive function (the skills used to manage everyday tasks like making plans, problem solving and multi-tasking) – skills that often decline as we age.

## Cognition ignition

Although the IGNITE trial specifically looked at the associations between moderate-to-vigorous physical activity and cognitive performance in older adults (aged 65-80 years), other studies examined by UniSA researchers have shown that any form of exercise can significantly boost brain function and memory in children and younger adults as well. Children and adolescents showed the greatest improvements in memory, whilst people with ADHD saw the biggest gains in executive function.

The biggest cognitive improvements were seen amongst people who went from doing no exercise, to even five minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity a day. The best news? The benefits are delivered quickly, with clear improvements in as little as one month, and even small bursts of regular activity can make a difference.

## Sweat it out

The findings of these studies demonstrate the importance of prioritising exercise as part of our everyday routines, in particular, physical activity that increases our heart rate. This type of activity will look different for different people. A brisk walk might be enough to get one person's heart pumping, for another it might be a jog, or an intense session on a stationary bike.

Despite the strong correlation between high-intensity exercise and brain health, UniSA researcher Dr Ben Singh says that even low-intensity exercise like yoga or walking can improve cognition, making it accessible to people of all ages and abilities. Furthermore, mind-body exercises like yoga and Tai Chi were found to have a significant impact on memory, while 'exergames' (active video

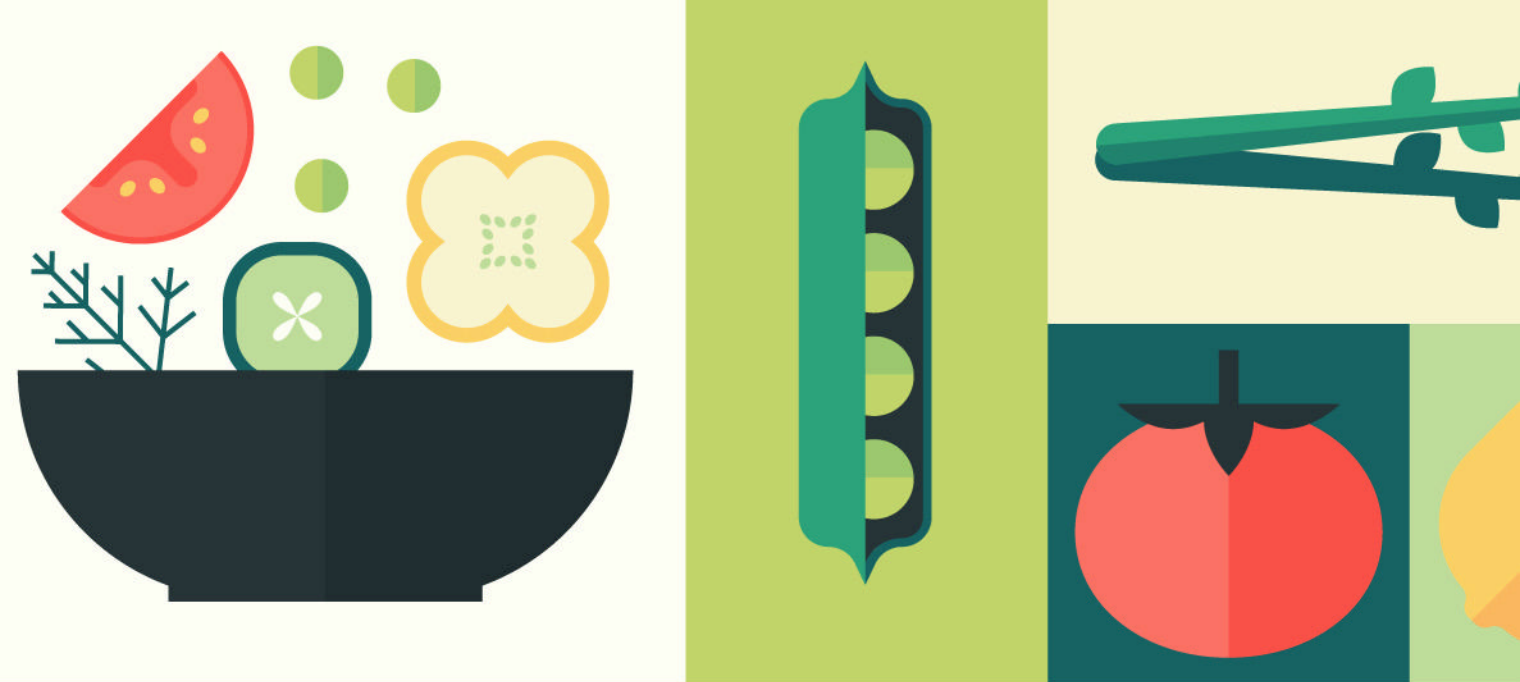
games) like Pokémon Go were effective for general cognition. Anyone for a round of Wii Fit?

## Let's get physical

You don't need to slap on the lycra and jump into an aerobics class to feel the benefit. And it needn't be an hour-long body pump class, either. The research has shown that short bursts of high-intensity exercise are beneficial for your brain, so find something that works for you, that you will enjoy, such as:

- A quick walk or even a jog around the block at a nominated time (at lunch, while the kids are at soccer/netball training, or incorporate it into your commute)
- Create a mini workout circuit at home, do three minutes of intense activity, for example, 30 seconds of skipping, 30 seconds of star jumps, 30 seconds of jogging on the spot, and so on.
- If you already walk, try adding short running intervals to your routine, even just for 10 seconds at a time.
- Start off slow and up your intensity level as your fitness increases. Always consult your healthcare team before starting any new exercise regimen.





# PATTERNS MAKE PERFECT





## Living well with diabetes isn't about perfection – it's about consistently repeating patterns

For the millions of people living with type 2 diabetes, managing the condition can sometimes feel like walking a tightrope – one misstep in diet, one skipped workout, one stressful week, and suddenly blood glucose spikes and guilt creeps in. It's a cycle that many people know too well: striving for perfection, falling short, and then feeling like a failure.

But here's the truth that too often gets lost in the noise of blood glucose measurements and rigid food rules: living well with diabetes isn't about being perfect. It's about creating sustainable, supportive patterns over time.

### The All-or-Nothing Trap

Many people begin their diabetes journey with a burst of determination – cutting carbs, signing up for the gym, planning every meal with military precision. And while that motivation is admirable, it's often rooted in an “all-or-nothing” mindset. In this mindset, a slice of cake at a birthday party or a missed workout isn't just a slip – it's a personal failure.

The reality? Life happens. Blood glucose is influenced by dozens of variables: stress, illness, sleep, hormonal shifts, medications, even the weather. A perfect number every day isn't just unrealistic – it's unnecessary. What is essential is developing consistent habits that, over time, move the needle in the right direction.

### Why Patterns Matter More Than Perfection

Let's think about diabetes management like gardening. You don't expect flowers to bloom

overnight. You water them, give them sunlight and pull out weeds as they appear. Some days are dry. Some plants wilt. But with consistency, things grow.

The same applies to diabetes. Skipping one workout doesn't undo weeks of activity. Eating dessert at a family gathering isn't a catastrophe. What truly matters is the overall rhythm of your life – the patterns that guide your eating, movement, sleep and stress management.

These patterns form the foundation of long-term health. Research consistently shows that small, sustainable changes maintained over time have more lasting impact than short-term, intensive efforts. In fact, even modest weight loss – just 5-10 per cent of body weight – can significantly improve insulin sensitivity and reduce the risk of complications.

### The Power of Micro-Wins

Rather than chasing perfection, focus on “micro-wins” – small, achievable changes that fit into your real life. For example:

- » Swap out one sugary drink a day for water or unsweetened tea
- » Walk for 10 minutes after lunch instead of sitting down right away
- » Prepare a balanced breakfast the night before to avoid a simple-carbs grab-and-go choice

These tiny shifts may seem insignificant on their own, but repeated daily, they create momentum. Each one sends a powerful message to your brain: I'm in control. I'm making progress.

### Reframing “Bad” Days

Everyone living with diabetes has



## lifestyle

challenging days. A stressful work meeting, an unexpected illness or a rough night's sleep can throw blood glucose levels off balance. Instead of labelling those days as 'bad', it's more helpful to view them as data.

Blood glucose numbers aren't a moral judgment – they're information. A spike can be an opportunity to ask:

- » Did I skip a meal or eat later than usual?
- » Was I feeling anxious or overwhelmed?
- » Did I sit more than normal today?

This gentle curiosity, rather than harsh self-criticism, is what fuels better choices tomorrow. Remember, diabetes is a condition that requires constant adjustment – not perfect execution.

### Making Peace with Food

One of the most emotionally charged areas of diabetes management is food. People often feel like they have to give up all the foods they love or never eat dessert again. But this all-or-nothing thinking can lead to feelings of deprivation, binge eating and guilt.

The better approach? Create patterns of eating that are flexible, enjoyable and balanced. This might mean:

- » Enjoying a slice of pizza with a big side salad
- » Saving a portion of dessert and savouring it mindfully
- » Swapping refined carbs for complex ones most of the time, but not beating yourself up when you don't

You don't have to eat perfectly to control blood glucose – you just need to build meals that work for your body most of the time.

### Building a Supportive Routine

Consistency is easier when it's

anchored in routine. That doesn't mean your life has to become rigid, but having a general structure can help reduce decision fatigue and make healthy choices more automatic. Try:

- » Keeping a regular sleep schedule to stabilise blood glucose levels overnight
- » Eating meals around the same times each day to support insulin sensitivity
- » Scheduling physical activity into your week just like appointments

Even five minutes of stretching or walking in place counts. It's not about intensity – it's about showing up consistently.

### Emotional Resilience Matters

Living with diabetes isn't just a physical challenge – it's an emotional one. The daily monitoring, decision-making and fear of complications can take a toll. That's why tending to your mental health is just as important as tracking your blood glucose levels.

Emotional patterns – like how you talk to yourself, respond to setbacks or handle stress – have a direct impact on how you manage your condition.

Practices that can help include:

- » Mindfulness or meditation to manage stress and reduce emotional eating
- » Journaling to track mood and patterns alongside blood glucose
- » Therapy or support groups to process frustration, anxiety or burnout

You're not weak for needing support. You're human.

### Celebrate the Long View

Sometimes it's hard to see progress day by day, especially when the

condition requires so much attention. That's why it's important to zoom out. Instead of obsessing over yesterday's reading, look at:

- » Your A1C trends over the past six months
- » How your energy, sleep or mood has improved
- » The choices you've made this month that your past self might not have

Progress isn't always visible on a glucose meter. Sometimes it looks like fewer sick days, more time playing with grandkids or a walk you didn't think you could take a year ago.

### Rewriting the Diabetes Story

Many people internalise a story that goes like this: "I have diabetes because I failed. I have to punish myself to get better. And I'll probably still get sick anyway."

But what if that story changed?

What if it became: "I have diabetes. But I'm learning to understand my body. I'm making choices that support my health, and I'm stronger than I thought."

When you focus on patterns, not perfection, you create a life that supports your wellbeing instead of controlling it.







## The Rhythm of Life

Living well with diabetes is not about flawless meal plans or perfect blood glucose readings. It's about creating rhythms and routines that align with your body, your values and your life.

Small changes add up. Progress is personal. And success is not measured in the absence of mistakes – but in the strength of the habits that keep you moving forward, one day at a time.

You don't need to be perfect. You just need to keep going.



# FROM CRASHES



# TO CLARITY

How stable blood glucose can improve your work, focus and creativity



For many people living with type 2 diabetes, managing blood glucose levels is framed mostly as a medical necessity – something done to avoid long-term complications like nerve damage, kidney disease or vision loss. While those outcomes are critically important, they're far from the whole story.

What's often overlooked is the daily impact that blood glucose fluctuations have on how we think, feel and function. From morning meetings to creative brainstorming, our energy, mood and mental clarity are directly tied to what's happening in our bloodstream.

If you've ever felt foggy after lunch, struggled to focus in the late afternoon, or experienced a burst of energy followed by an inexplicable crash, unstable blood glucose might be playing a bigger role than you realise.

The good news? When blood glucose is in a healthy range – not too high, not too low – it doesn't just support your physical health. It can dramatically enhance your ability to work, solve problems, think creatively and simply enjoy your day.

Let's take a deeper look at how stabilising your blood glucose levels can supercharge your brain – and how to build the habits that make it happen.

### The brain on blood glucose: why it matters

Your brain runs almost entirely on glucose. While it makes up only about 2 per cent of your body weight, it consumes roughly 20 per cent of your total energy. That means even small swings in blood glucose can have a big effect on how your brain performs.

**High blood glucose (hyperglycemia) can lead to fatigue, brain fog, irritability and even mild confusion.**

**Low blood glucose (hypoglycemia) can cause shakiness, trouble concentrating, mood swings and forgetfulness.**

For people with type 2 diabetes, especially those using insulin or certain oral medications, these highs and lows can happen frequently – sometimes without warning. And while it's easy to focus only on the numbers, what's happening behind the scenes in the brain can quietly erode productivity, mental sharpness and confidence over time.

## How unstable blood glucose levels impact focus and performance

### COGNITIVE FOG AND MENTAL FATIGUE

When blood glucose spikes and then crashes – especially after meals heavy in refined carbohydrates – it can cause a sharp drop in mental energy. Tasks that once felt simple suddenly seem overwhelming. You may find yourself rereading the same sentence multiple times or zoning out in meetings.

Stable blood glucose, on the other hand, keeps your brain fuelled in a consistent, reliable way. You can think more clearly, process information more quickly and stay mentally engaged for longer periods.

### MOOD AND EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

Fluctuations in blood glucose can trigger mood swings that feel like emotional whiplash.

Irritability, anxiety and even depressive symptoms can worsen during episodes of hyper- or hypoglycemia.

Keeping blood glucose stable can help you feel emotionally balanced, which is essential for navigating work stress, difficult conversations or the demands of family life. Emotional stability also fosters creativity – your brain feels safer exploring new ideas when it's not constantly reacting to internal stress signals.

### CREATIVITY AND PROBLEM-SOLVING

Many people don't realise how strongly blood sugar can influence the creative parts of their brain. The prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for innovation, planning and higher-order thinking, is extremely sensitive to energy availability. When glucose levels are erratic, the brain prioritises survival tasks (like regulating breathing and movement) over creative functions.

In contrast, stable blood glucose supports consistent cognitive energy, which helps you connect ideas, think outside the box, and find solutions faster.







# HOW TO STABILISE YOUR BLOOD GLUCOSE

*(without becoming a perfectionist)*

The key to better mental performance isn't perfection – it's creating steady, supportive patterns that keep your blood glucose levels more even throughout the day. Here's how to do that:

## 1

### **Start with a balanced breakfast**

Skipping breakfast or grabbing a sugary option can set you up for crashes before noon. Choose a breakfast that includes protein, fibre and healthy fat – like eggs with vegetables, Greek yoghurt with chia seeds, or a smoothie with protein powder and spinach.

This helps keep your blood glucose from spiking first thing in the day and sets a balanced tone.

## 2

### **Choose low-GI carbs**

Not all carbs are created equal. High-glycemic carbs like white bread, soft drinks and pastries cause sharp spikes and drops in blood glucose. Instead, opt for wholegrains, legumes, berries and starchy vegetables, which release glucose more slowly and help your brain stay fuelled.

## 3

### **Don't let yourself get too hungry**

Going too long without eating can cause your blood glucose to drop, leading to fatigue and irritability. Aim for consistent meal timing, and include snacks if needed – especially ones with protein and fibre, like almonds or hummus with vegies.

## 4

### **Walk after meals**

Light movement after eating can help lower blood sugar and improve insulin sensitivity. A 10- to 15-minute walk after lunch can dramatically reduce post-meal glucose spikes – and also re-energise you for the afternoon.





# 5

## Get enough sleep

Poor sleep raises stress hormones, which can interfere with insulin and lead to higher fasting blood sugar. Prioritising 7-9 hours of quality sleep not only improves your energy but also helps stabilise your metabolism and mood.



# 6

## Reduce hidden stressors

Stress – even if it's not obvious – can raise blood glucose levels. Practices like deep breathing, stretching, journaling or even five minutes of quiet can help calm your nervous system and improve glucose control throughout the day.

## Real-world wins: how better blood glucose shows up in daily life

When you learn how to keep your blood glucose levels steady, the benefits ripple into every part of your day:

- You wake up feeling refreshed, not groggy
- Morning meetings feel sharper and more productive
- You retain more information, whether you're reading a report or helping your kids with homework
- You're less reactive under stress
- Creative tasks – writing, designing, planning – feel flowing, not forced
- By evening, you still have enough energy to be present and engaged at home

These aren't abstract ideas – they're real shifts people experience when they bring their glucose into a healthy range and keep it there.

## Your brain deserves a steady ride

We often talk about diabetes management as a way to prevent damage. But what if we started talking about it as a way to unlock your potential?

Maintaining a stable blood glucose level doesn't just help you avoid complications in the future – it helps you feel better right now. It improves the quality of your work. It sharpens your thinking. It brings you back into your body with clarity, confidence and control.

Whether you're managing a team, caring for your family or building your own business, mental energy is your greatest asset. And blood glucose stability is the secret weapon you didn't know you had.



## Start small

You don't need to overhaul your entire life to experience the brain-boosting benefits of stable blood glucose levels. Start small. Swap one meal. Add one walk. Choose one night to go to bed early.

With each step, you build a more stable foundation – not just for your physical health, but for your mental edge, emotional strength and creative spark.

Because when your blood glucose is steady, your mind is, too. And that's when the real magic begins.



Wondering if vitamin, mineral or herbal supplements will help you manage your diabetes? DL Magazine dietitian and diabetes educator, Dr Kate Marsh, discusses what the evidence says about supplements and how to use them safely

# SUPPLEMENT SAFELY

## Supplement use in Australia

Complementary medicines include vitamin and mineral supplements, herbal medicines, traditional remedies including Chinese, Ayurvedic and bush medicines, homeopathic preparations and some nutritional supplements including weight-loss products.

According to Complementary Medicines Australia, the Australian complementary medicines industry has been growing steadily in recent years and is continuing to grow. Annual revenue reached approximately \$6.2 billion in 2024, with vitamins and dietary supplements making up more than 40 per cent (\$2.65 billion).

A 2018 survey of more than 2000 Australian adults found that almost two-thirds of respondents used some form of complementary medicine and close to half used vitamin/mineral supplements. Females, those with a chronic health condition (such as diabetes) and those with higher education levels were more likely to use complementary medicines. An older study, reporting on findings from the 2011-2012 National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey, found that 47 per cent of

women and 34 per cent of men reported using supplements. In their 2024 industry snapshot, Complementary Medicines Australia say that over 75 per cent of Australian households use complementary medicines, particularly those with higher education and income levels.

## Show me the evidence

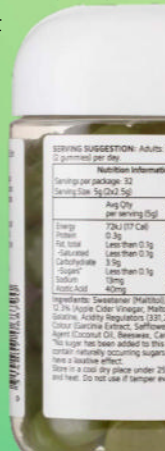
While it seems supplement use is common in Australia, particularly in those looking to prevent or manage health problems such as diabetes, the evidence for their use is often lacking.

There are several supplements commonly promoted for helping to prevent or manage diabetes, but while some studies have shown benefits, others didn't find any significant effects from taking them. Overall, the evidence is inconclusive. This is largely because many studies are of poor quality. For example, studies may have too few participants or be too short to show results. The dose and form have also varied widely. And unlike prescription medications, in many studies, it isn't clear how much of the



# UNDERSTANDING LABELLING

In Australia, complementary medicines are regulated by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). This is a two-tiered system based on risk. Most complementary medicines are considered low risk, so are 'listed' medicines, while most prescription and over-the-counter medications are considered high risk, so are 'registered' medicines. The latter will have a number on their packaging beginning with AUSTR. Once approved, complementary medicines are included in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) and are labelled with a number starting with AUSTL. The TGA assess listed medicines for safety and quality but not for efficacy, although the manufacturers of listed medicines are required to have data to support the claims they make for their product. To ensure quality and safety, the product must only contain ingredients from a pre-approved list that the TGA has already assessed for safety and quality and must be manufactured in a certified facility that meets quality standards.



**SERVING SUGGESTION:** Adults: Enjoy 2 capsules per day.

| Nutrition Information       |                         |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Servings per package: 32    | Avg Qty per serving (g) | Avg. Qty per 100g |
| Serving Size: 5g (2 x 2.5g) |                         |                   |
| Energy                      | 120 kJ (29 Cal)         | 3600 kJ           |
| Protein                     | 0.3g                    | 6.1g              |
| Net total                   | Less than 0.5g          | Less than 1g      |
| Saturated                   | Less than 0.1g          | Less than 2g      |
| Carbohydrate                | 3.5g                    | 78.5g             |
| "Sugar"                     | Less than 0.5g          | Less than 1g      |
| Isobutyl                    | 15mg                    | 281mg             |
| Ascorbic Acid               | 4.0mg                   | 80.0mg            |

**Ingredients:** Sweetener (Maltitol), Apple C 1% (Apple Cider Vinegar, Malic Acid, Acidity Regulators (E330, E302), Natural Colourant Extract, Softener (Sorbitol), Coconut Oil, Benzoin, Camellia Oil.

\*No sugar has been added to this product, contain naturally occurring sugars. Excess have a laxative effect.

Store in a cool dry place under 25°C sealed and fresh. Do not use if tamper evident seal is broken.

complementary medicines are considered low risk, so are 'listed' medicines, while most prescription and over-the-counter medications are considered high risk, so are 'registered' medicines. The latter will have a number on their packaging beginning with AUSTR.

**NUVISION INFORMATION**

**SERVING SUGGESTION:** Adults: Enjoy one serving  
2 gummi's per day.

**Nutrition Information**

Servings per package: 32  
Serving Size: 54.2g (2.1 Oz)

|              | Per Serving (54.2g) | Per 100g       |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Energy       | 720 (17 Cal)        | 1420 (34 Cal)  |
| Protein      | 0.3g                | 0.5g           |
| Fat, total   | Less than 0.1g      | Less than 0.1g |
| Sugar        | Less than 0.1g      | Less than 0.1g |
| Carbohydrate | 3.5g                | 78.5g          |
| Fiber        | Less than 0.1g      | Less than 0.1g |
| Acetic Acid  | 13mg                | 280mg          |
| Malic Acid   | 400mg               | 800mg          |

**Ingredients:** Sweetener (Maltitol, Apple Cider Vinegar, 20% Juice, Natural Cedar Vinegar, Malic Acid, Water, Dried Non-Glutinous, Astringent, Acids, Citric Acid, Natural Flavor, Mint, Natural Citrus Extract, Safflower Extract, Tannins, 100% Apple, Coconut Oil, Sesame, Camphor, Natural Wax).

No Sugar has been added to this product, the ingredients contain naturally occurring sugars. Excess consumption may be a leading effect.

Store in a cool dry place under 25°C away from direct light and heat. Do not use if tamper evident seal is broken or missing.





‘active’ ingredient was given. We are also unsure of how many herbs and supplements work.

In their 2025 Standards of Care, the American Diabetes Association conclude that there is insufficient evidence to support the routine use of herbal supplements and micronutrients, such as cinnamon, curcumin (e.g., turmeric), aloe vera or chromium, to improve blood glucose management in people with type 1 or type 2 diabetes.

The US National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health say that there is weak evidence for a possible benefit of a few dietary supplements, such as chromium, cinnamon or berberine for blood glucose management and alpha-lipoic acid for reducing pain associated with diabetes-related nerve damage. However, they say that most of these studies have limitations and evidence supporting the benefits of most supplements for diabetes is lacking. They also point out that some dietary supplements may have side effects, and these can be serious, such as kidney damage.

### Supplement safety

Supplements may be ‘natural’ but this doesn’t necessarily mean they’re safe. Just like pharmaceutical medicines, supplements can have side effects or interact with other medications or supplements you take. So, if you choose to take a supplement, do so safely by keeping the following points in mind:

- Always tell your doctor about any supplements you are taking and why you are taking them – make a list to take to your appointment or take the bottles with you. Studies have



shown that many people taking supplements never tell their doctor, and many doctors fail to ask about them!

- Find out if there is any reliable evidence for the use of the supplement. One place to look is the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH): [nccih.nih.gov](http://nccih.nih.gov).
- Speak to your doctor about whether the supplement is safe for you. Could it interact with any of your prescription medications or other medical problems you have?
- Know the right dose, including how much and how often you should take it.
- Be aware of any side effects and when you should stop taking it.
- Choose a reputable brand, preferably manufactured in Australia.
- Introduce only one new supplement at a time so that if there are benefits or side effects,

*“...there is insufficient evidence to support the routine use of herbal supplements and micronutrients to improve blood glucose management...”*



- you can determine which one was responsible.
- If you are taking a supplement to help with blood glucose levels, monitor your levels more regularly once you start the supplement, particularly if you are taking insulin or medication which could cause hypos.
- If the supplement is effective, you may need to adjust your medication, but don't stop taking your prescribed diabetes medications without telling your doctor.

- If you use the Freestyle Libre 2 continuous glucose monitor, know that vitamin C supplements of more than 500mg/day can affect the accuracy of the sensor readings, falsely raising the glucose reading, which means you could miss a low glucose level.

## BUYER BEWARE!

It's important to consider where you purchase complementary medicines. While buying supplements over the internet might be tempting because of a lower price or easier availability, it can be risky. With overseas sites in particular, the safety and quality of products may not comply with strict Australian standards, the manufacturing processes are unknown and there is no local point of contact in case you have problems.

There have been cases where supplements manufactured outside Australia have been found to contain heavy metals, pesticides or fungal toxins and harmful bacteria. So even at a higher price, shopping for Australian-made products locally is a safer bet.







# *What's your* **MOBILITY** **PLAN?**

At least one third of older Australians report struggling with their mobility, something that's been shown to significantly impact quality of life. Fortunately, including a few key exercises in your workout routine could help you avoid becoming a statistic

**W**hen your mobility isn't an issue, it's easy to take being able to do simple, everyday tasks like taking the bins out or doing a spot of gardening, for granted. But if your mobility starts to slide and doing those things becomes challenging – or even impossible – you might find yourself wondering, or even wishing, if you could have done something to protect your ability to move around freely.

“Training appropriately and performing important movements can definitely help to maintain and improve mobility, by

engaging and building the muscle groups associated with each exercise and increasing control, functionality and stability,” says Mark Glanville, co-founder of Movement HQ, a Sydney-based gym which offers dedicated functional mobility classes.

Worryingly though, Mark agrees that mobility and doing specific exercises to maintain it, probably isn't on most people's radars. “In fact,” he says, “I think most people probably don't understand what mobility is. Many think mobility is the same thing as flexibility, so don't prioritise it.”









# So what is MOBILITY?

And, apart from impacting your ability to take out the bins, why does it matter so much?

“Mobility is the ability of a joint – or multiple joints at the same time – to move actively through a full range of motion, often involving strength and coordination to do so,” says Mark, who explains that in comparison, flexibility is related to muscle length and is improved by stretching exercises.

“Mobility is essential for good mechanics and for lowering the risk of injuries. The ability to move well and efficiently also makes general tasks like housework, navigating stairs, engaging actively with grandchildren and plenty of other things, easier.

“The more able and mobile you are, the more likely you are to continue to be able to do these things. On the other hand, the less mobile you are as you grow older, the more dependent on other people you’re likely to become.”

## Does every type of exercise build mobility?

Any and every type of exercise is beneficial for your health and

wellbeing, but when it comes to protecting and improving mobility, it’s specific movements and exercises that have the most effect. For example, the results of a study released in 2022 show that when people living with shoulder immobility embarked on a purpose-built mobility exercise program involving three sessions a week, their range of shoulder-joint motion improved significantly after eight weeks.

“A true mobility-only focused movement plan has exercises that will probably look a

little bit weird to the average person as they’re often performed in a quadrupedal position, on your hands and knees on the floor, and focus on the rotation of a single joint at a time,” says Mark.

“However, I also think it’s really important to train for both mobility and strength together, as they go hand in hand to support health and wellbeing.”



*“Mobility is essential for good mechanics and for lowering the risk of injuries.”*



## SQUATS

"You can do these simply using your body weight or as 'loaded' squats by holding anything that adds weight and increases the overload on your tissues and joints, whether that's a barbell, a full backpack or even a bag of potatoes."

**1** Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, toes pointing slightly outwards. Keeping your chest up and back straight, bend your knees, aiming for a depth where your thighs are parallel to the ground or lower, depending on your mobility. Make sure your knees follow your toes, rather than caving inwards, and don't let them extend over your toes, either.



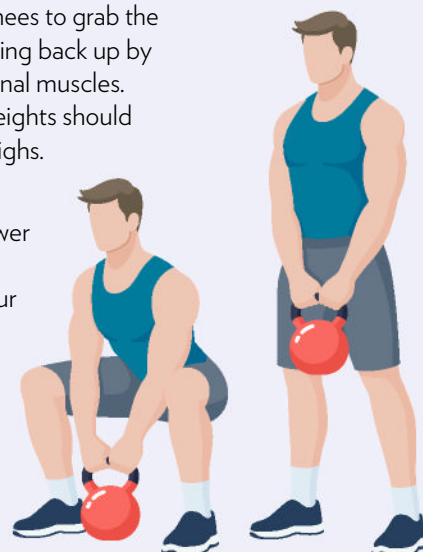
**2** Reverse the movement to stand up straight again, keeping your core muscles engaged to protect your lower back. Repeat for the desired numbers of repetitions.

## WEIGHTED DEADLIFTS

"Like squats, deadlifts are another multi-joint movement that engage the lower extremities but with a little more focus on core strength and utilising the glutes, hamstrings and back muscles more than squats."

**1** With a pair of dumbbells or single kettle bell positioned on the ground in front of your feet, stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, toes pointing straight ahead, and knees unlocked. Hinging your torso forward at the hips and keeping your back straight, bend your knees to grab the weights before standing back up by bracing your abdominal muscles. Once upright, the weights should be in front of your thighs.

**2** Reverse the movement to lower the weights back to the floor, keeping your back flat and the weights close to your body. Repeat for the desired number of repetitions.



# 3 EXERCISES TO TRY

For general mobility maintenance, Mark recommends making the following exercises part of your regular physical activity routine to stay mobile, strong and healthy. "These are good examples of exercises that help to build both strength and mobility at the same time."



## PUSH-UPS

"Push-ups or other forms of 'pressing a weight' such as chest presses, are a great compound exercise option for increasing upper-body strength and mobility."



**1** Get into the push-up position with your body in a straight line from your head to your heels, hands shoulder-width apart or slightly wider and feet hip-width apart. Keeping your neck in line with your spine, lower your chest towards the floor until it's a few inches clear or your shoulders have reached elbow depth.

**2** Reverse the movement until you're back at the starting position. Repeat for the desired number of repetitions.



## my story: good health

With a strong family history of type 2 diabetes and heart disease, Briony Beckett, 41, always assumed she would end up with a chronic health condition. Her recent significant weight loss has seen her blood pressure return to healthy levels and she is no longer in an at-risk category.

**M**y family is Aboriginal so diabetes has always been something to keep an eye on. There's a family history of type 2 on my dad's side, and both sides of the family have a history of heart disease. Over the years my blood tests showed that things were starting to creep – high blood pressure, slightly high cholesterol, and sodium levels. Thankfully I never got to the point of being diagnosed.

In 2023, I went to the doctor with some sinus issues. They said I had sleep apnoea because I was overweight. I started going to the gym six days a week, saw a dietitian for six months, and nothing changed. I got fitter! But my weight stayed the same, my blood pressure kept creeping up, and my blood test results weren't changing.

In February 2024, I went to donate blood, but if your blood pressure is over a certain level, you can't donate. The second time this happened, I thought okay, I need to go back to the doctor about my blood pressure!

That was a bit of a turning point, up until then I was able to ignore everything else because in myself, I felt fine. But when my blood pressure started creeping up, I realised that if I didn't do something about it, I'd end up on medication for the rest of my life. I needed to try something else!

### *A different approach*

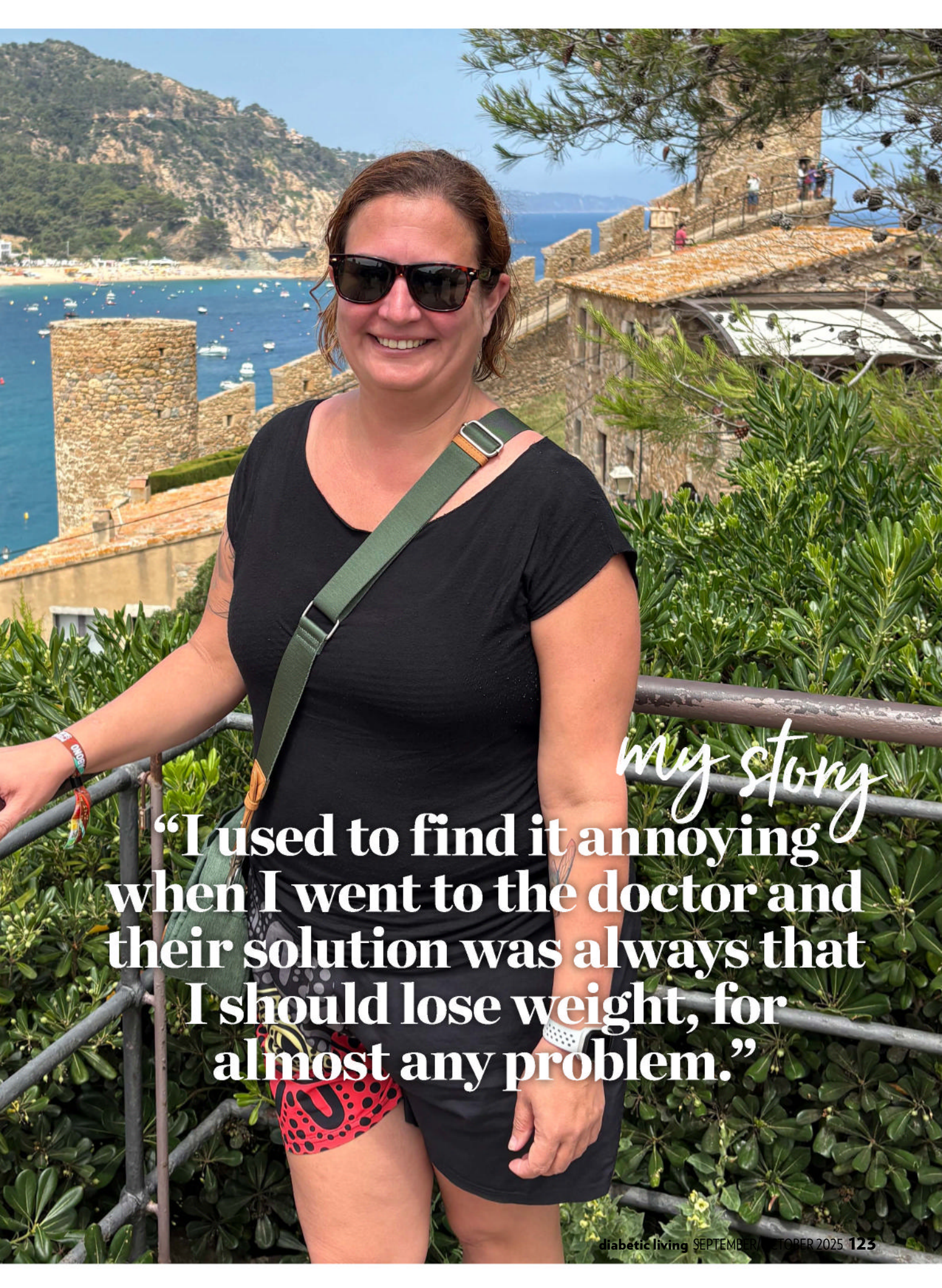
I started on the Juniper program in March 2024 after seeing an online ad. My doctor had previously mentioned prescription weight loss injections, but they were hard to access. Even through the program you could only get it from a compounding chemist, as compounded semaglutide. It freaked my family out at first because current affairs shows were doing stories on rip-offs of these medications being sold through social media, and making people sick. I had to reassure them that the medication was from a real chemist and it was all legitimate!

The cost of the program covers doctor consultations, health coaches, meal plans, exercise plans, and the medication, which gets sent to your house. At first I baulked at the cost, but when I thought about it, I pay more for my dog walker each week, so I wondered why I was questioning



**BEFORE WEIGHT LOSS, BRIONY WORRIED SHE WOULD DEVELOP CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS**





*my story*

**“I used to find it annoying when I went to the doctor and their solution was always that I should lose weight, for almost any problem.”**





*Not being in that risk zone anymore (for a variety of things) is a huge achievement. I no longer feel like I'll end up with a chronic health condition.*

**BRIONY NOW  
HAS CONFIDENCE  
AND PEACE OF  
MIND ABOUT HER  
HEALTH**

this amount, which is for my health!

I was really lucky with my experience on the medication. Unless I ate something really rich, I didn't really experience any side effects, which is something I was worried about. The main issue was just not wanting to eat because I wasn't hungry. And of course you do still need to eat to fuel your body. It makes you think more carefully about what you choose to eat.

### ***Inspiration and support***

I live by myself so I didn't always stick to the meal plans, since I only cook for one. But the recipes and meal plans were great inspiration to create my own. And it gives you reminders about exercise too. It was great to know I was doing something that was beneficial to my health in the long term.

They also had great tips about healthier swaps. For instance, I don't drink coffee with milk anymore. I found the milk filled me up a lot, so drinking it black means I can have my coffee hit, but I'll still have room for a nutritious breakfast that will fuel me, rather

than just having coffee.

Being on the program meant I had regular check-ins with the Juniper doctors and health coaches, and I could also access their online community. You see other people's progress and hear their stories, which helps you to see that slow and steady progress is the best way. If you're left on your own, it's easy to expect dramatic results, especially because of portrayals in the media.

### ***The new me***

So far I have lost 25 kilograms. I lost most of that weight in the first six months. I've stalled a little in the last few months but I'm in a maintenance phase now. All the health indicators that I was worried about have come down.

I had my blood pressure checked, and blood tests redone at about the nine month-mark. Although it was great to lose weight and see the physical changes, seeing those test results was very rewarding. It was the whole reason I went down that path.

I didn't really have a goal weight in mind as it was more about those health markers but a secondary

goal was to be able to buy "normal" sized clothes, rather than plus-sized. Just last week, I bought a size 16 pair of trousers, which was a great moment. It sure makes shopping for clothes easier!

I'm still on semaglutide but I know a lot of people in the group who have come off it, and stayed off it. I did stop taking it for a short while over Christmas and Easter, and I'll stop taking it for my upcoming holiday as well, so I can enjoy things. I'm hoping to eventually wean off it altogether.

### ***Life's great!***

I used to find it annoying when I went to the doctor and their solution was always that I should lose weight, for almost any problem. But now, a year into the program and having lost a lot of weight, I can see that in my case, it was true. It took time for me to recognise that they weren't just fat-shaming me!

Not being in that risk zone anymore (for a variety of things), is a huge achievement. Growing up, I was very aware of my family history. I've always had private health insurance with the top level of cover for heart conditions because I assumed someday I'd end up in hospital! I no longer feel like it's a certainty that I'll end up with a chronic health condition. You just never know with hereditary conditions, but it's amazing to not have to worry about my health anymore. I can just plan to enjoy life!



# Your PUZZLES

Grab a cuppa and a comfy chair – it's time to put your brainpower to the test.

## CODE CRACKER

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and it's your task to decode them all. We have given you three letters to start you on your way, so you can see that P=5, A=9, D=12, and Y=21. You can record each letter as you work it out in the letter checker at the bottom of the grid.

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 13 | 25 | 9  | 14 | 8  | 20 |    | 24 | 19 | 1  | 15 | 15 | 25 | 5  |    | 12 | 8  | 5  | 25 | 11 | 21 |
|    | 4  |    | 9  |    | 25 |    | 6  |    | 7  |    | 25 |    | 1  |    | 8  |    | 25 |    | 8  |    |
| 5  | 1  | 8  | 15 |    | 20 | 14 | 1  | 7  | 5  |    | 7  | 25 | 6  | 6  | 20 |    | 17 | 25 | 6  | 14 |
|    | 11 |    | 7  |    | 5  |    | 7  |    | 15 |    | 17 |    | 6  |    | 24 |    | 1  |    | 8  |    |
| 8  | 20 | 24 | 9  | 5  | 8  |    | 9  | 2  | 23 | 24 | 9  | 12 | 23 |    | 8  | 10 | 24 | 8  | 5  | 11 |
|    |    | 23 |    |    | 24 | 23 | 11 |    | 2  |    |    |    | 22 | 23 | 4  |    |    |    | 19 |    |
| 16 | 25 | 4  | 14 | 8  | 11 |    | 8  | 6  | 1  | 10 | 1  | 15 | 20 |    | 12 | 8  | 5  | 6  | 23 | 21 |
|    | 4  |    | 8  |    |    |    |    |    | 4  |    | 7  |    |    |    |    |    | 23 |    | 11 |    |
| 23 | 17 | 8  | 21 | 8  | 12 |    | 9  | 4  | 18 | 25 | 1  | 20 | 19 |    | 8  | 7  | 5  | 6  | 23 | 21 |
|    | 6  |    |    |    | 15 | 9  | 7  |    |    |    | 11 |    | 21 | 9  | 7  |    |    | 25 |    |    |
| 5  | 23 | 4  | 24 | 19 | 23 |    | 9  | 5  | 5  | 6  | 9  | 25 | 12 |    | 5  | 25 | 15 | 18 | 8  | 12 |
|    | 24 |    | 23 |    | 23 |    | 20 |    | 6  |    | 11 |    | 15 |    | 9  |    | 1  |    | 12 |    |
| 20 | 14 | 1  | 7  |    | 5  | 9  | 20 | 11 | 9  |    | 1  | 4  | 9  | 5  | 11 |    | 3  | 23 | 18 | 20 |
|    | 8  |    | 1  |    | 8  |    | 8  |    | 26 |    | 23 |    | 4  |    | 19 |    | 6  |    | 8  |    |
| 8  | 12 | 25 | 24 | 8  | 12 |    | 12 | 15 | 9  | 18 | 4  | 8  | 11 |    | 21 | 1  | 8  | 6  | 12 | 20 |

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|    |    |    |    | P  |    |    |    | A  |    |    | D  |    |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
|    |    |    |    |    |    |    | Y  |    |    |    |    |    |



# CHUNKY CROSSWORD

Sharpen your pencil and show what you know. *For solutions, see page 127.*

## ACROSS

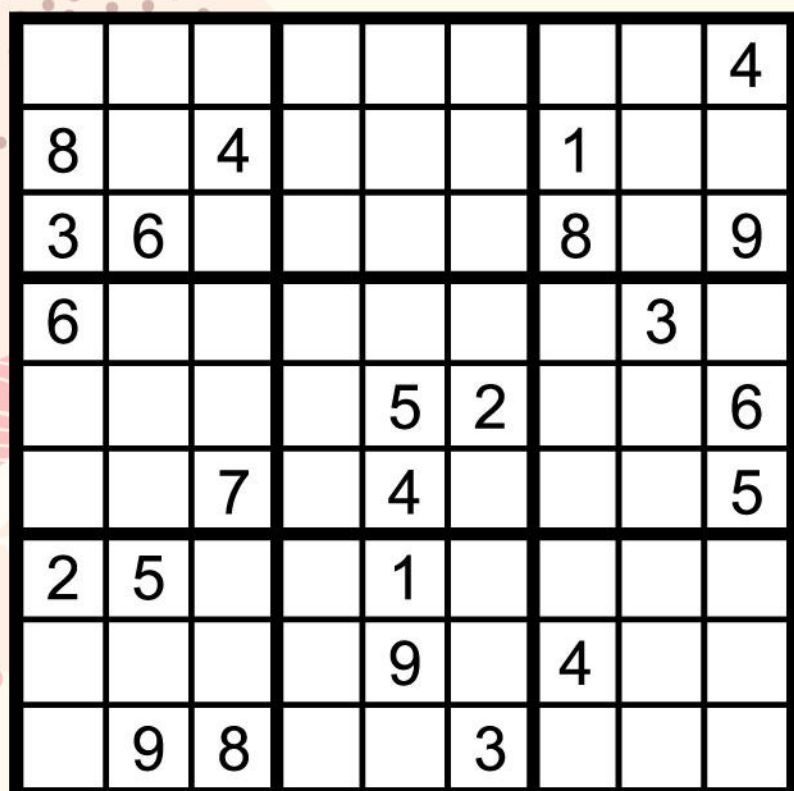
- 1** Overjoyed, thrilled (8)  
**6** Beyond belief (10)  
**13** Foe, competitor (5)  
**14** Rock or snow slide (9)  
**15** Belief (5)  
**16** Avenger (7)  
**18** Robert Louis ---, *Treasure Island* author (9)  
**19** Primate (3)  
**20** Snake charmer's serpent (5)  
**22** Body of soldiers (5)  
**24** Tree fluid (3)  
**26** Short-tailed lemur (5)  
**28** Detest (6)  
**29** Swiss city (6)  
**31** Cowboy hat (7)  
**32** Return to native land (10)  
**34** Literary writings (10)  
**37** Canada and Colombia's continent (7)  
**38** Russian currency unit (6)  
**39** Shipboard beds (6)

- 41** Marsh (5)  
**42** Historic period (3)  
**43** Exterior (5)  
**45** Prod with an elbow (5)  
**46** Massage (3)  
**48** Body of customers (9)  
**51** Liz Ellis' sport (7)  
**53** Japanese rolled rice dish (5)  
**54** Stinkiest (9)  
**55** Dye (5)  
**56** Tasmanian city (10)  
**57** Example, sample (8)

## DOWN

- 2** --- of the crop, best of the best (5)  
**3** Plaything (3)  
**4** Conduct business (8)  
**5** More rough (7)  
**6** Daft, absurd (5)  
**7** Dog breed (6,7)  
**8** Fencing swords (5)  
**9** Emergency section of a hospital (9,4,4)

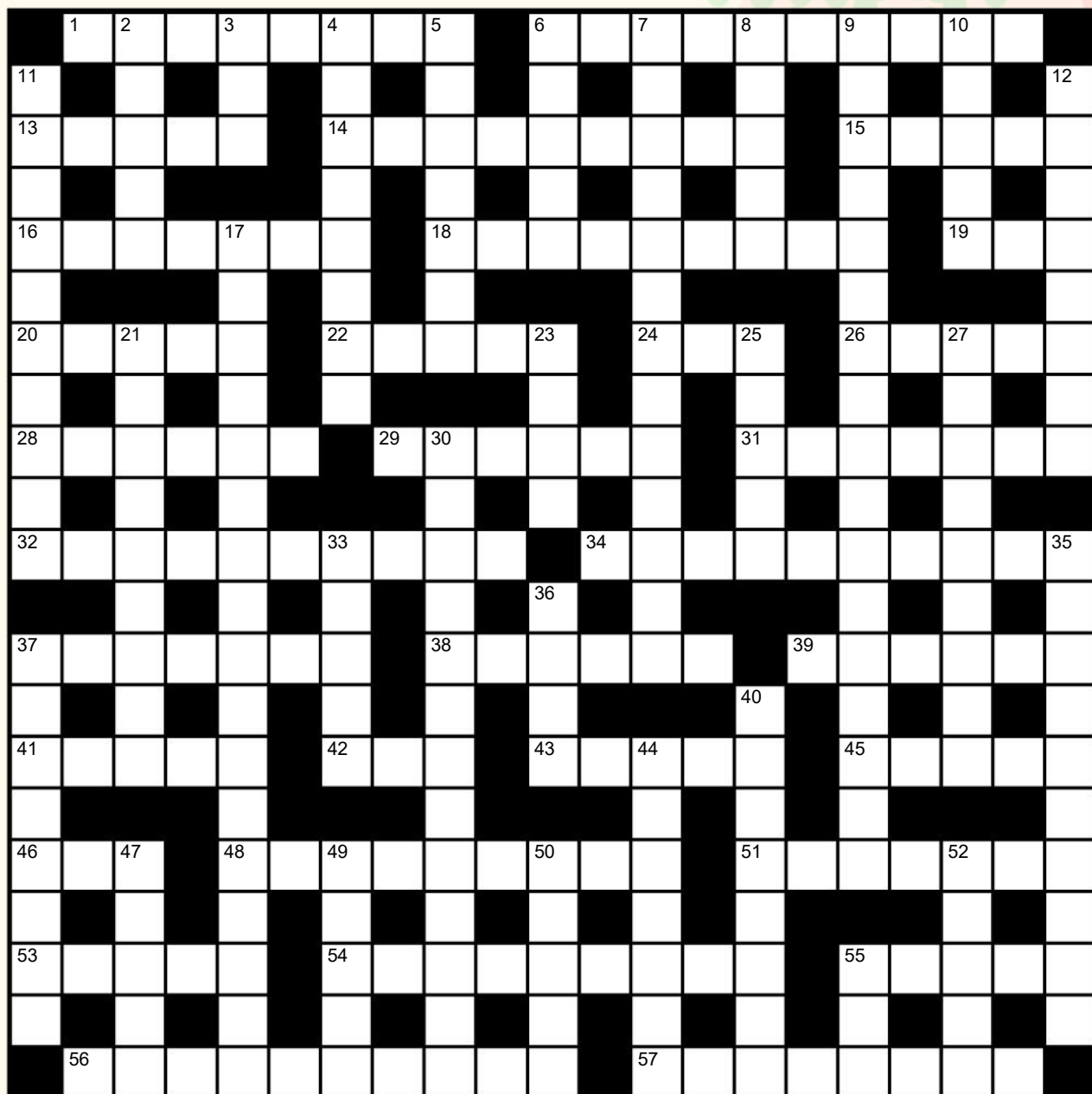
- 10** --- Ronstadt, singer (5)  
**11** Native speech (10)  
**12** Resident of Athens (8)  
**17** Complicated road intersection (9,8)  
**21** Profanity (9)  
**23** Fat (4)  
**25** Snowfield prepared for skiing (5)  
**27** Caused disorder (9)  
**30** Amusement (13)  
**33** Graphic representation (5)  
**35** Winds coming from the east (10)  
**36** Japanese wrestler (4)  
**37** Tree specialist (8)  
**40** Brown-haired (8)  
**44** Wigwams (7)  
**47** --- nova, dance (5)  
**49** Edition (5)  
**50** --- Pompeo, *Grey's Anatomy* lead actress (5)  
**52** Stroll (5)  
**55** --- *Only Had A Brain*, Scarecrow's song in *The Wizard of Oz* (2,1)



## SUDOKU

Place the numbers 1-9 in each horizontal and vertical line, noting each number can only appear once in each of the nine 3 x 3 squares.





Turn upside down for puzzle solutions

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 7 |
| 7 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 2 |
| 2 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 8 |
| 1 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 5 |
| 9 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 6 |
| 6 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| 3 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 9 |
| 8 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 4 |

Sudoku

**Across:** 1 Ecstatic, 6 Incredible, 13 Enemy, 14 Avalanthe, 15 Tent, 16 Nemesis, 18 Stevenson, 19 Ape, 20 Cobra, 22 Corps, 24 Sap, 26 Indri, 28 Loathe, 29 Geneva, 31 Stetson, 32 Repatriate, 34 Literature, 37 America, 38 Rouble, 39 Berths, 41 Bayou, 42 Era, 43 Outer, 45 Nudge, 46 Rub, 48 Clientele, 51 Metball, 53 Sushi, 54 Smelliest, 55 Imbue, 56 Launceston, 57 Specimen.  
**Down:** 2 Cream, 3 Toy, 4 Transact, 5 Coarser, 6 Inane, 7 Cocker Spaniel, 8 Epees, 9 Intensive Care Unit, 10 Linda, 11 Vernacular, 12 Athenian, 17 Spaghetti Junction, 21 Blasphemy, 23 Suet, 25 Piste, 27 Disrupted, 30 Entertainment, 33 Image, 35 Easterlies, 36 Sumo, 37 Arborist, 40 Brunette, 44 Teeppees, 47 Bossa, 49 Issue, 50 Ellen, 52 Ambie, 55 If/.

Crossword

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Q | U | A | K | E | S | C | H | I | R  | R  | U  | P  | D  | E  | P  | U  | T  | Y  |
| P | I | E | R | S | K | I | M | P | M  | U  | L  | S  | B  | U  | L  | K  |    |    |
| E | S | C | A | P | E | B | L | C | I  | T  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| J | U | N | K | E | T | E | L | L | X  | I  | R  | S  | D  | E  | P  | L  | O  | Y  |
| O | B | E | Y | E | D | A | N | G | U  | I  | S  | H  | E  | M  | P  | L  | O  | Y  |
| P | O | N | C | H | O | A | P | L | A  | U  | D  | P  | U  | R  | G  | E  | D  |    |
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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| Q | U | A | K | E | S | C | H | I | R  | R  | U  | P  | D  | E  | P  | U  | T  | Y  |

Code Cracker







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## BREAKFAST, SNACKS & SIDES

- 84 Banana & tahini porridge ●
- 85 Banana oat pancakes ●
- 54 Cottage cheese biscuits ●
- 72 Crispy sweet potatoes with chickpeas & tahini yoghurt ●●
- 52 Fruit & cheese breakfast bowl ●●
- 66 Greek-style baked feta ●●●
- 69 Herbed broad bean & feta crostini with asparagus ●●●
- 56 Muhammara ●●
- 76 Mushroom & sage sausage rolls ●
- 54 Pancakes with maple syrup ●●
- 72 Roast fennel & bread gratin ●●
- 74 Roasted tomatoes & creamy tahini yoghurt ●●●
- 70 Sesame, haloumi & zucchini fritters with chilli honey drizzle ●●
- 68 Slow-cooked vine tomatoes with garlic ●●●
- 66 Spring vegetable & flatbread platter with dill & mustard dip ●●

- 80 Thyme & oregano chips ●●●
- 80 Tzatziki ●●●
- 74 Zucchini & tahini dip ●●●

## MAINS

- 40 Artichoke & eggplant rice ●●
- 87 Asparagus & tuna salad ●●
- 80 Big barbecue chicken kebab ●●
- 16 Broccoli falafel pitas ●●●
- 18 Chicken with sweet & sour leeks ●
- 60 Easy seafood chowder ●
- 62 Egg & avocado open sandwich ●●●
- 87 Egg wrap with salad ●●
- 79 Gnocchi pomodoro ●
- 48 Healthy chicken pasta bake ●●
- 47 Mac 'n' cheese lasagne ●●
- 27 Miso roasted tofu with sweet potato ●●
- 44 Peanut butter noodles with tofu & veg ●●
- 87 Quick vegie & bean soup ●●
- 18 Ratatouille lasagne ●●

- 34 Roast broccoli & sesame ramen noodle bowls ●●
- 16 Salmon & pumpkin soup ●●
- 38 Slow cooker eggplant & chickpea stew ●●
- 20 Spiced prawns with parmesan polenta ●
- 62 Spicy teriyaki prawns & sesame fried rice ●
- 28 Sweet potato jacket with coronation chickpeas ●●
- 27 Sweet potato nachos ●●
- 28 Sweet potato Tex Mex salad ●●
- 40 Vegetable biryani ●●
- 60 Vegie-loaded flatbread ●●●
- 30 West Indian sweet potato curry ●●

## DESSERTS

- 84 Boozy baked caramelised bananas ●
- 52 Lemon crepes with honeyed fruit ●●

**KEY** ● Gluten free ● Gluten-free option ● Vegetarian ● Lower carb ● Lower-carb option

**COOKING** All our recipes are designed for a fan-forced oven. If you have a conventional oven, you'll need to increase the temperature by 10-20°C, depending on your oven. All recipes are tested in a 1000W microwave oven.

**FREEZING** Pack individual serves into airtight containers. Label with the recipe name and date. Main meals will generally freeze for three to six months, with three being optimal. To reheat, put the dish in the fridge overnight to defrost (never leave it on the bench overnight) or defrost on low/30% in the microwave. Reheat on the stove, in the oven, or microwave it on medium/50%, depending on the dish.

**GLUTEN FREE** When a recipe ingredient is tagged 'gluten free' it may either be branded gluten free or gluten free by ingredient – please check the label to ensure the product is suitable for you. **Note:** Some spices carry a 'may contain' statement. It is important to check the label of packaged products to ensure they are gluten free.

**LOWER CARB** When a recipe is tagged 'lower carb' it means it is less than 2 carb exchanges for a main or light meal and less than 1 carb exchange for a snack or dessert. This may be beneficial for people who are trying to control their type 2 with diet and/or medication. If you are on insulin and planning to follow a lower-carb diet, speak to your care team first.

**LOWER-CARB OPTION** When possible we will provide an ingredient substitution from the main recipe to reduce the carbs to less than 2 carb exchanges for a main or light meal and less than 1 carb exchange for a snack or dessert.





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